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CHRIST'S VIEW OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

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CHRIST'S VIEW OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A STUDY IN JEWISH APOCALYPTIC AND IN THE MIND OF JESUS CHRIST

BRUCE LECTURES

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY

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TO

MY MOTHER

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In recent years our Lord's conception of the Kingdom has been the topic of many able and thoughtful books. Through careful study we have entered more deeply into His mind regarding His Father and His Father's will. But occasionally we have felt as if the new absorption in certain transcendent and supernatural aspects of His teaching had caused a partial obscuration of its appeal to conscience, and its claim to have full verification in the living experience of a redeemed society. It has also proved difficult to think together the message of the Kingdom and such modern ideas as history and progress.

In the following pages Mr. Manson offers us valuable aid in dealing with these great problems. He is master of the scholarly debate, and this is much. But also he has a persistent spiritual judgment which is not intimidated by random appeals to the modern mind. Recalling us to the fact that in the phrase "the Kingdom of God," as Jesus used it, the important word is *God*, he enables us

to see, more clearly than before, that just because God is Holy and Almighty Father, the coming of His Kingdom is relative to the Cross in Jesus' experience and to faith in ours. Too many discussions of the subject leave an impression of unreality on the reader's mind, because they fail, perhaps do not attempt, to connect the Kingdom vitally with Jesus' death. We owe a debt to anyone who can make the connection somewhat more evident, and it is here that Mr. Manson gives important help.

Those into whose hands this book may come for serious study—and they will, I trust, be many—will find that it does for them a great service: it enables them to understand in a new and more satisfying way how Jesus' message of the Kingdom, in spite and by means of its apocalyptic vesture, is in essence "an expression of the urgency, immediacy, and inevitable triumph of God's will to reconcile the world to Himself" (p. 174).

H. R. Mackintosh.

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PREFACE

THE following pages incorporate a series of Bruce Lectures given in the Theological College of the United Free Church, Glasgow, in 1914. Various circumstances have delayed their preparation for publication, and in the form in which they now appear almost nothing remains of the original lectures except the argument. It is hoped, however, that by this delay and revision the argument has gained in clearness and in force, especially as it has been possible to relate it in some degree to events and aspirations of the present time. The book is issued in the hope that it may be of service to students of the Gospels, for whom the Eschatological Question still constitutes the gateway to all higher and fuller historical understanding of these precious documents.

The writer is indebted to many, both teachers and friends, who have helped him, above all to the revered and beloved teacher, at whose suggestion the task of preparing these lectures was first undertaken. What he owed to Dr. James Denney for counsel and encourage-

ment he can, however, never adequately tell. The literary references are given in the foot-notes. In the preparation of the book for the press the writer has been greatly assisted by Prof. John E. McFadyen, and he is specially indebted to Prof. H. R. Mackintosh for his kindness in contributing the Introductory Note.

Glasgow,
March, 1918.

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CHAPTER I

EVOLUTION AND APOCALYPTIC

WHAT did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God, and how did He say it would come? To what extent did His thought reflect the ideas of His time, to what extent was it the product of His unique religious consciousness and His own creative mind?

The question is important, because "the Kingdom of God is at hand" was the message with which Jesus came forward to His own generation. Also it was the proposition to which His whole work and teaching were expressly dedicated. Moreover there is no idea which in modern times has come to exercise so great a fascination over thoughtful minds as that of the Kingdom of God. More and more it has seemed to loom out above the tragic failures and mistakes of men as the Goal to which all progress must be bent, the Good to which all lesser good must yield. Thus even a popular novelist of the present can say that the Kingdom of God "is the only possible formula under which we may hope to unify

and save mankind."[1] Nevertheless, when we come to Jesus' own thought of the Kingdom, and attempt to relate it to this striving modern idealism, we are confronted with a peculiar difficulty, the difficulty of determining what we may take to be Jesus' view of history. It is contended from a certain side that Jesus' view of history was radically different from ours. Let us see wherein this difference consists.

It is almost an axiom of modern thought that the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus is nothing other than the final term of human progress, humanity carried to its goal. We think of history as advancing by a series of developing stages, of which the Kingdom of God is simply the highest and last. We integrate the Kingdom of God into the evolutionary process, nor is there any consciousness that in so doing we are taking any liberties with Jesus' own conception or putting it to uses which He did not sanction. We regard Jesus as taking fundamentally the same view of history as we do, and assigning to the world's goods and institutions the same positive value. And this idea of the Kingdom of God which operates in all modern schemes for the religious improvement of humanity is thought, not unreasonably, to be justified by its results.

[1] H. G. Wells.

But in more recent years, through the progress of religious-historical studies, the view has arisen that this application of the term "Kingdom of God" is not, so far as Jesus Himself is concerned, defensible or true. It is the reading back of modern notions of progress into a mind which did not and could not entertain them. Jesus' view of history, it is argued, was not like any with which we are to-day acquainted. It was the apocalyptic outlook of His time, which regarded the existing world as about to be dissolved, and expected that a new heavenly order, the "Kingdom of God," would immediately appear, which the "Son of Man" would bring. Jesus, it is said, shared this idea. He had no interest in this world, or even belief in its continuance. The thought of Judgment filled His horizon and imparted its peculiar quality to all His teaching, especially His ethic. This is a view of history differing radically from the other. We are asked to divest ourselves of all modern notions of progress, and to stand where *ex hypothesi* Jesus stood, at the end of a world order, despairing of history, face to face with Eternity. So only, it is argued, do we understand Jesus. Jesus turned away from history. He denied all value to the world's life and institutions. Even if the other idea of the Kingdom, viz.,

that it comes about by progress, be for us the equivalent of Jesus' conception, it was not in that form the conception of Jesus.

The collision of two such different views of Jesus' relation to history makes the question, What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God, all the more important. To the wistful modern interest in the Kingdom of God it cannot be indifferent whether Jesus did or did not believe in progress. Let it be said that in the recorded utterances of Jesus there is just enough support for the second of the above hypotheses to make it vital to discover how near it comes to the whole truth. Does the truth, indeed, lie with either of the above interpretations? Does it sufficiently observe the borderland between them to admit of either of them separately being taken as the whole account of the matter? The answer to these questions can only be reached by an impartial examination of the Gospel data.

Suppose, for example, it were admitted that Jesus did not and could not share the modern belief in progress, would that make the second hypothesis, which assumes Him to have lived and moved wholly within the apocalyptic ideas of His time, any less likely to be, in one so great as Jesus, a colossal *petitio principii?* Is our experience of great men such that we should

deem their dependence on the thought or language of their day a more important factor than their own creative insight? There are no great thinkers who have not their own peculiar secret, and it would be strange if in Jesus' exposition of the Kingdom there was not a "mystery" which perplexed the followers of the tradition.[1] But this, while probable on *à priori* grounds, is not to be concluded quite in that form. It has to be established, if at all, by a just regard for all the evidence.

We have then to ask to what extent Jesus shared the apocalyptic view of history, and to what extent ideas of historical fulfilment and reality, going beyond the ordinary apocalyptic view, and expressing the creative force of His own mind, are found in His teaching.

In the following pages we shall seek to understand: first, the apocalyptic idea in Israel, and its formal relations to the teaching of Jesus; second, the Kingdom of God as expounded by Jesus in the various aspects of its coming, ethical constitution, and ultimate triumph; third, the Messianic consciousness of Jesus in relation to Jewish ideas; and fourth, the value of the apocalyptic element in Jesus' teaching when the full force of His own interpretation is allowed for.

[1] Cp. H. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des N.T.*, p. 12f.

Before we go on to these, however, there are one or two considerations which, as illustrating the interdependence of the evolutionary and apocalyptic lines of thought, call for somewhat fuller treatment.

1.—The belief in Evolution is so deeply rooted in the modern mind that no system of ideas which does not conform to its general outline is likely to obtain much acceptance. Yet in speaking of evolution it is well to remember that before anything can be evolved it must already in some sense be there. Thus the saying, "Life cannot get out of tragedy until we bring about the Kingdom of God,"[1] presupposes in the writer's mind an *idea* at least of the event desired. Now if Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God first as idea and then as event, and if He spoke of the idea as already like a seed cast into the ground, His teaching fits in with the general outline of the evolutionary scheme, and yet it is evolution with a difference. *We are dealing no longer with a merely mechanical process which is not subject to direction from the spiritual side, and we are no longer dependent on Time simply to produce the result, but on Faith.* Time might produce *any* results if there were no ideas to control the evolutionary process.

[1] H. G. Wells, *The Soul of a Bishop.*

Evolution and Apocalyptic

The view taken in the following pages is that Jesus, who grasped and possessed the Kingdom in Himself, gave it to men as idea, and cast into the ground the seed which was soon to ripen to event. In so doing He set the Kingdom in line with processes which we have learned to call evolutionary, but its coming was made no longer a matter of time simply or even chiefly, but of faith. "The Kingdom of God," He said, "*is nigh*." Evolution to the Christian is in no sense a merely mechanical process, but it is controlled and regulated by the Divine Idea.

For this reason it will not do, even on the evolutionary scheme, to postpone the Kingdom of God to the *end* of time, as though it were a far-off event for which we simply had to wait. The belief in progress does not guarantee progress at all unless it is held on a basis of faith.

The modern idea of evolution has, however, been held in forms which, because they exclude or do not allow for, the operation of spiritual forces or faith, do not amount to a theory of progress. The evolving world, for lack of faith, is evolving to-day to nothing but ruin. Events like the present war are showing how impossible it is for mere evolution to bring us to our goal. They are establishing the propo-

sition that only the Divine idea entering into the process can save the world from itself. While the machine of human affairs is running smoothly it seems that nothing more is needed than to leave it to itself, but when the great machine goes wrong we feel the need of the guiding hand that made it. From this point of view we must expect in our day a qualified interest in the mere idea of progress and an increased disposition to envisage transcendent forces.

2.—With the modern belief in Evolution there has gone hand in hand a habit of "world-affirmation," inseparable from the perception that the world, its life and institutions are always going on. In Jesus' ethical teaching on the other hand, there is a marked "world-renouncing" tendency which the advocates of the eschatological view explain by reference to His outlook on the future, His expectation of the speedy dissolution of the existing order. We are asked to believe that Jesus, in demanding sacrifice, the surrender of worldly goods and interests, and the acceptance of suffering for the Kingdom of God's sake, was like the captain of a sinking vessel who calls on his crew to abandon the ship and take to the boats, regarding nothing in such a solemn hour but the saving of the soul itself. Whether this is the

meaning of the Cross, we must leave it to a later chapter to settle. But of the perils of a world without the Cross, as of evolution without faith, the world in its present state is all the evidence needed. If the evolutionary process in man's life has to be controlled by Divine ideas, the affirmation of the world with which it coheres has equally to be checked by emphasis of the Cross. Jesus has to be lifted up high that all men may see Him and be drawn unto Him. We may find, therefore, that Christian ethic, so far from being the "exceptional legislation" belonging to a time when the world, with all its interests, its loves and hatreds, was thought to be going under, is on the contrary the only basis on which a decent world-order can continue. In that case the evolutionary idea receives further powerful qualification. The "cosmical" and "ethical" processes, to use Huxley's terms, are not in the final sense opposed. Only, *the cosmical process in man's life has to be controlled by the ethical. The Kingdom of God for men comes by the Cross.*

3.—The modern mind tests the truth of a system of ideas, not only by its congruity with its own scientific standards, but by the evidence of the course of history. If, however, what the eschatologists say is true, viz., that Jesus

held out no prospect for the existing world but that of dissolution and supersession by a supra-natural order, it appears that history is against Him. Christianity has run its course in a way that its Founder did not contemplate, and has survived by experiences which had no place in His immediate interests. We must ask, however, whether these conclusions rest on a right understanding of Jesus' use of apocalyptic phraseology. When He employed the imaginative language of His time, did it appeal to Him as literal or as symbolic, the language of history or the language of faith? It is of great importance to make out the real meaning of apocalyptic phraseology, the sense in which it was intended, not by slavish literalists, but by spiritual minds. Take, for example, Jesus' prediction of His coming again, His appearance on the clouds of Heaven. It was not fulfilled in the literal sense within His own generation, but was it therefore illusion? Was it a prediction of a literal event, or was it a *Credo*, an act of faith, by which, on the basis of Scriptural promise, Jesus affirmed His unshaken belief in the Divine vindication of His cause and the triumph of His Kingdom? These questions arise in the course of an inquiry which is concerned with the relation of the Kingdom

of God to the actual course of history. The truth of the Parousia-prediction may be quite independent of its historical perspective, the foreshortening of the future which its literal terms imply. The Church of Jesus survived by seeing it fulfilled in the facts of spiritual experience, and *we have to ask whether this method of solving the apocalyptic equation does not go back to the Master Himself.*

These various considerations define in some degree the issues raised by the question with which we started. We need in the whole course of our inquiry to guard against the uncritical assumption that because the eschatological interpretation of Jesus is strange to the modern mind it is therefore wrong. On the other hand the language of Jesus must be considered in the light of its true meaning which may not always be its literal significance. Subject to these provisos, there are three general questions which in the course of the inquiry outlined above we shall have to ask.

(1) Whether Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom can be wholly fitted into the framework of the apocalyptic ideas of His time.

(2) To what extent it comes into line with processes which we now call evolutionary.

(3) In what sense the coming of the Kingdom depends on Faith and the Cross of Christ.

CHAPTER II

THE APOCALYPTIC IDEA IN ISRAEL AND ITS FORMAL RELATIONS TO THE TEACHING OF JESUS

I

That view of things which we associate with Jewish apocalyptic writings, and which finds in those writings its best-known and most elaborate expression, originates in the necessity which the religious mind experiences to find some adjustment between the course of things around it and its faith in God. Looking out on the world we find ourselves confronted with a series of facts and events which, whatever they may mean, are not their own end. There is no philosophy of human things, therefore, which does not in this sense include a teleology, or attempt to relate the existing course of things to their underlying idea or purpose. Now eschatology is the form which under the peculiar conditions of Jewish religious history teleology took. In contrast with the "cycle" hypothesis, common to many early philosophies, and finding its classical exposition

in Stoicism, the Jewish religion conceived the world as moving to a definite goal. The Stoic might think of time as an endless circle of events, and of the present world as made up out of the fragments of pre-existing worlds only to be eternally resolved into the same again.[1] Such a view did not content the Jew who saw all things moving to the Judgment Throne of God, and this sinful world replaced once for all by a New Heaven and a New Earth wherein should dwell righteousness (Isa. lxv. 17).

This faith in its turn depends upon the view that God is *above* the world, and not confined in His activities to the operation of natural causes. "Jahweh is free," says Wernle, "in subjection to nothing but His own will; therefore religion never turns into philosophy amongst this people, but becomes faith in the God that creates things anew."[2] It is possible that if the Jew had lived in an age conversant with the idea of natural law, he would, to some extent, have framed his creed within the forms of that idea. All the same, the thing which counted with him was that God was above the world, and God's will and purpose for the world were not limited to what, as a matter

[1] E. Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, p. 51; F. C. Burkitt, *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, pp. 3, 30-33.

[2] Wernle, *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 17.

of course, goes on there. Beyond the present world of sin and failure lay an eternal order, holy, just and good, which might at any moment break in upon this. Now *Eschatology implies this conception of a reserved purpose of God.* It is, as Dr. H. R. Mackintosh says, " mere foolishness if God and the Universe are two names for the one thing."[1] The term which the Jew used to express this reserved purpose of God was the term " Kingdom of God." The pregnant nature of the conception comes out when we imagine a man looking out on the present world-order and asking what inference may be drawn as regards the Divine relation to it.[2] On every side he sees war, oppression, cruelty, sin, and when he extends his range of observation further, it is still the same, " the whole world lieth in wickedness." Faced by this spectacle, some have drawn frankly the *atheistic* inference. A character in a modern book says " It is not that I do not accept God . . . *It is the world created by Him I do not and cannot accept.*"[3] He speaks of the religious conception of God's will and our actual experience in this

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *Immortality and the Future*, p. 118.

[2] A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, p. 19.

[3] Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, pp. 246ff. (Mrs. Garnett's translation), where Ivan states the case for- modern materialism.

world as parallel lines which do not meet. The pious Jew, on the other hand—see the fourteenth Psalm—thinks differently. To him they are lines which do meet. They meet in the Kingdom of God. His comment on our present experience is that God's power has not yet been fully revealed. *God has not yet come to His Kingdom.* There is something which withstands Him, and delays the consummation of His purpose, but it is only for a time. God will yet reveal His power, and then all that obscures or denies Him will be done away. "It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isaiah xxv. 9).

It is on this conviction that the whole structure of Jewish eschatology comes in time to be built, and we see the process by which the term "Kingdom of God" assumes to itself the character which it wears in the later Jewish literature. Inasmuch as this Kingdom is conceived as matter of future *revelation*, the literature devoted to the subject is called "apocalyptic" literature. Over against a world of sin, brokenness and failure, we are shown the perfect Reign of God, the end of evil, suffering, oppression, death itself. "Here is death, there everlasting life; here flesh, there spirit; here sin, there innocence; here God

is far away, there we shall see Him face to face."[1] In the choice of the term "Kingdom of God" there was nothing arbitrary or accidental. The term is in itself an absolute, but historically it developed out of the theocratic relation in Israel. The kingdom of Israel stood for the sovereignty of God, the idea of His perfect control of the nation's affairs, and His lordship of the world. So far as Israel's own history was concerned, the ideal remained unrealized in practice, but it was not for that reason dropped. It was carried forward and made by the prophets the content of the coming Kingdom of God, or at least the nucleus round which later thought on the subject gathered.

As regards the *development* of this belief in Israel, it was largely determined by historical circumstances. The term "Kingdom of God" does not occur in the Old Testament, but the thought for which it stood is everywhere present. There was already from the beginning in Israel, under the form of the kingdom, the conception of a Divine order of life, both social and individual. The prophets, as God's representatives, were custodians of this ideal, and the measure in which the historical nation came up to this ideal was at the same time the measure of Israel's salvation.

[1] Wernle, *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 27.

On the one hand, the prophets, by making the kingdom the object of their criticism, recognised it in its empirical actuality as the form of the Divine life on earth; on the other hand, by criticizing it, they recognized the imperfection with which that form was realized. For a time the breach between the actual and the ideal did not seem too great for reforming processes to bridge, but later a change comes, and the prophets look to an act of God, a "Day of the Lord," as they call it, to bring salvation to Israel. It becomes increasingly clear to the prophets, not only that "the Kingdom of God is something which stands above the empirical kingdom of Israel," but that at need it can dispense with the kingdom of Israel altogether.[1] Amos even, in his time, can contemplate the prospect of only a fragment of the historical nation being saved (iii. 12; v. 2; v. 15). Isaiah has his characteristic doctrine of the remnant (vi. 12, etc.), Jeremiah his doctrine of a new covenant, implying a new start (xxxi. 31). The significance of this for us is that the severance between the actual and the ideal widens. The Kingdom of God, like Plato's ideal State, becomes less and less a thing of this world, and more and more something which must come

[1] A. C. Welch, *Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 58.

down out of heaven from God. The writer of Isaiah lxiii. 19 can even say that the Kingdom of God as a present reality has ceased to exist. "We are become as those over whom Thou never barest rule."

Between the two worlds, the kingdom as it now is, and the Kingdom as it shall be, stands "the Day of the Lord" (Amos v. 18; Isaiah ii. 12, xiii. 9f.; Joel ii. 11, 31f.; Jerem. xlvi. 10, etc.), the Judgment Day, which more and more assumes the dimensions of a cosmic event, embracing all nations, as well as Israel, under its shadow. It has been thought that in the prophetic references to the day of the Lord two elements can be traced, a primitive naturalistic conception of a world-catastrophe, and, following it, an idealizing interpretation by which in the minds of the prophets of Israel the naturalistic element is extruded and a more spiritual conception put in its place. It has been asserted that the language of Amos in regard to the Day of the Lord (*e.g.*, i. 14) permits the supposition that prophetic thought had ceased to think of the older language otherwise than as symbolic. The old forms persist, but they are used in a way that proves that already they are meaningless.[1] However that may be, the *language* of Jewish escha-

[1] A. C. Welch, *Religion of Israel*, p. 70. See pp. 69-73.

tology is never to be pressed. Its favourite symbols, sun turned into darkness and moon into blood (*e.g.*, Isaiah xiii. 9-10, Joel ii. 30-31), imply really that God is greater than the world, and that no fixity of nature or inexorable course of historical events can resist, or take precedence of, His holy will to do for His people that which He has promised. We may say of such language what a modern critic has said of that cognate expression of the Oriental mind, its Art, it is "the symbol or type of a really inexpressible world."[1] The important thing for us to grasp is that it was a really great thing, this passion of the Jewish mind for righteousness, magnifying God above the natural order, and proclaiming ultimately, as object of faith and hope, nothing less than a renewed and regenerate humanity, "new heavens and a new earth" (Isaiah lxv. 17).

The passage just referred to in Isaiah is probably very late, and much ground has been travelled between it and the early prophetic eschatology. In the early visions nothing is hoped for which exceeds the limits of the natural order. The agent of God in judgment is mostly war. God raises up enemies against His impenitent people, and speaks in

[1] Walter Pater, *Renaissance*, p. 216 (popular edition).

a strange language to ears that have been deaf to gentler appeals (Isaiah viii. 6-8, xxviii. 11). In Amos and Isaiah it is the Assyrians who execute God's judgment, in Zephaniah it is the Scythians. Beyond the fires of war lies the vision of a chastened and purified nation. The cloudy, fiery pillar of war leads Israel into the new land of promise. It agrees with this that in the early prophetic descriptions of the Restoration there is nothing that, strictly speaking, can be called supra-natural. We hear of Zion established on the top of the mountains, of the temple rebuilt, of a new covenant between God and His people, of the Spirit being poured out from on high. The thought of a *cataclysm* on a universal scale, bringing about the dissolution of the whole existing world, and introducing the Kingdom of God, belongs to the later apocalyptic literature, though hints of it occur here and there in the latest canonical prophets.

Before we go on to this latest phase of Jewish eschatology, the phase with which the teaching of our Lord connected, it is necessary to say a few words about the Messianic hope in the prophets. It has been argued on good grounds that the belief in a coming Deliverer, who should bring salvation to his people, was not confined to Israel, but formed part of the

common stock of Oriental religious ideas with which Israel's faith, on its earthly and human side, connected. However that may be, there was nothing to prevent its rise on the purely indigenous soil of Judaism. So long as the political kingdom lasted as monitor and type, in its earthliness, of the greater Kingdom to be, it was natural to connect its redemption with the expectation of an ideal ruler of the house of David who, as God's Messiah or Anointed, should appear at the appointed moment, and restore Israel to God. Not that this association of Kingdom and Messiah was universal, for in some of the prophets, Amos, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, it does not even appear. But the Divine promise to David's house (2 Sam. vii. 16; Psalm lxxxix. 3, 36-37; Jer. xxxiii. 15-21) was for many minds regulative, and we have that remarkable series of predictions in the prophets (Isaiah vii. 14; ix. 6; xi. 1; Micah v. 2; Zech. ix. 9-10; Jer. xxiii. 5), in which the promise takes shape. In this series nothing is said about the Messiah which, given Israel's faith in the promise made to David, and Israel's reading of her own history, exceeds the limits of historical probability. The titles given to the Messiah in Isaiah ix. 6 are only such as Israel might legitimately apply to one in whom, as God's

vice-gerent, "God's presence and His very self" were naturally looked for. As to Isaiah vii. 14, what the prophet means is very probably this. Ahaz, by his criminal war-policy, is imperilling the whole future of his nation, of which the Messianic hope forms far the brightest part. At any time the Divine Deliverer, promised by God, may make his appearance, but it will be to a land devastated by Ahaz' desperate action he will come. The Messiah himself will be the loser! This prediction, while showing how near the fulfilment of the Messianic promise seemed, does not place it in a light that requires going beyond the bounds of ordinary historical cause and effect. We conclude that the same is true, in greater or less degree, of the prophetic expectation generally.

The introduction of a more transcendent line of Messianic thought, according to which the Messiah appears on the clouds of heaven in a context of thoroughly supernatural conceptions, is due to the apocalyptic writers, above all to Daniel, the *fons et origo*, so far as we can see, of this way of thinking.

The last stage of Jewish eschatology—the apocalyptic idea proper—dates from Maccabean days. The peculiar turn it there takes originates in two facts characterising the life and thought of the times. One was Israel's

final extinction as a nation ; the other was the transcendent theology of the period. On the one hand, through the break-up of the nation, redemption was no longer conceived by earnest and serious spirits as within the power of historical processes to effect. The day was past when political and moral changes, even in association with the historical promise to David's line, seemed equal to the task of removing the ills and woes under which Israel and the world were lying. Only an act of God, comparable to the first creation of the world, could release society from its incurable defects, and set it on the right way again. Thus while the ordinary Jew went on believing in an emancipated Israel under a warrior Son of David, electer spirits turned their thoughts to the hope, now risen above the horizon, of a new creation, mediated by the Divine Judgment, and realizing at one stroke all the conditions of a renewed and regenerate life on earth. The Danielic idea of the Kingdom of God, from which the later eschatology starts, is that of a Kingdom which comes down out of Heaven, and supersedes entirely the kingdoms of this world (Dan. vii. 13, f.). Its associations, corresponding with the transcendent theology of the period, are wholly supernatural, without analogy in this world. It implies, for one

thing, resurrection. When that day comes, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awaken, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2-3). It has been asserted that the idea of resurrection came to Israel from Persia. However that may be, moral processes at work in the lives of Israel's saints, processes witnessed to in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Job and even Ecclesiastes,[1] prepared the way for its acceptance. It had proved itself the only egress of the believing spirit from world-despair, and from Daniel onwards it takes its place in the higher Jewish thought of the individual's destiny.

A new Messianic idea also characterizes this later phase of Israel's theology. Just as the earlier hope of the Kingdom was bound up with a Davidic Messiah, the later eschatology centres round a transcendent "Son of Man" who first makes His appearance in Daniel vii. 13. It is true that the "Son of Man" there has no connection with Messianic thought, but typifies the ideal humanity of the Kingdom in contrast with the brutal forces which symbolize the world-empires (Daniel vii. 3-12, 16-26). That did not prevent him becoming the

[1] Koheleth's cry, "The world is old—All is vanity" is the preparation, on the negative side, for the apocalyptic creed of "All things new."

central figure of a whole new line of Messianic thought, which crops to the surface before long in writings like Enoch and 2 Esdras, and appears in the Gospels in connection with Jesus. We must remember the intense interest which this Figure, once embodied in the canonical tradition, would awaken. It was as if a new light had appeared above the horizon which from now onwards, for spirits anxiously scanning the darkness of the times for signs of the coming day, proclaimed itself the Morning Star of their hopes (cp. Rev. ii. 28 ; xxii. 16). The new idea having established itself, there was no generally accepted principle of harmonizing it with the old, nor was there on this or other points any settled apocalyptic *dogma*. The conception of the Kingdom of God assumed different forms in different minds, being united now with patriotic national ideals, and now with broader spiritualizing and universalistic tendencies. It was cherished by Zealots on the one hand, burning with desire to throw off the foreign political yoke, and on the other by peaceful Quietists, who were content to " wait for the redemption of Israel." It became the end to which the Pharisees bent their earnest fastings and observances, for it was believed that if the whole Torah could be kept even for one day

the Kingdom of God would come. As for the Messiah, scribal study of the Old Testament led to features from the older Davidic-Messianic line of thought being aligned loosely with the new apocalyptic conceptions.[1] In the popular mind the two series of ideas, the old and the new, were not distinguished. They lay loosely piled on one another like the two strata of a geological fault, and ultimate reconciliation was neither achieved nor attempted.

The religious value of the apocalyptic idea is not to be judged by the curious and often grotesque forms in which it is embodied, nor by the *world-weariness* in which it takes its rise. Frankly it despaired of this world altogether, but that is not surprising when we consider Israel's position, crushed between the upper and nether millstones of surrounding world-empires. Where could Israel look for salvation except from God, from the skies? And placed as she was, how could she envisage her extrication and redemption except as part of a general dissolution of this world, brought about by Divine intervention? It was not a question of her being secured a mere chance to live. It was a question of her religion

[1] Cp. Baldensperger, *Die Messianische Hoffnungen des Judentums*, I, pp. 97-104.

triumphing. The apocalyptic literature of Israel is a cry to God to avenge His own elect who cry unto Him day and night. Its inevitable mood is that expressed in the words from the Apocalypse of Baruch ; " The youth of the world is past, and the strength of creation is exhausted, and the coming of the time is very short. . . . The pitcher is near to the cistern, and the ship to the port, and the course of the journey to the city, and life to its end."[1] Such sentiments are not natural to ages or societies which have witnessed a great advance in science, refinement of manners, and legislative progress, and are therefore joined to the belief that progress will make all things right. Such ages or societies will envisage God's purpose along lines more connected with ordinary experience. But it was different with the pious Jew of the Post-Maccabean period. To him, salvation, when it came, could be nothing short of miraculous (cp. John iii. 2 f.). And as it is from the deep mine that the stars are seen at noonday, so it was out of the deepest affliction that he saw the signs of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Nor should we forget the wonder of this literature considered as a *testimony to faith.* " That national ruin and individual tragedy "

[1] Apocalypse of Baruch, lxxxv., 10.

says Mr. A. G. Hogg, "instead of destroying trust in the covenant Jehovah, should have stirred up Hebrew faith to expect greater and still greater things of God, until prophetic souls had visions of a 'Kingdom of God' which should be nothing less than heaven upon earth—this fact is one of the most wonderful in the history of religion. It affords strong evidence that the growth of the Messianic hope was no mere development of intellectual speculation, but that God was leading Israel onwards in the knowledge and revelation of Himself."[1] Apart from this the apocalyptic literature is a spirited and energetic protest against acquiescence in the existing evils of the world. Its pronouncement of doom on the present order is simply its final refusal to condone the sin and injustice which goes on in it. Its limitation as a practical Gospel is the extremeness of its pessimism which makes men despair of the attempt to improve things. The Jewish apocalyptist believed that this world was under the power of Satan and his minions. He opposed this Satan-ridden age in the sharpest possible way to the age when God would be all in all. But in so doing he was really claiming this world for God. "The virility of his creed," says a modern writer,

[1] *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, p. 24.

" lay in this refusal to acquiesce in evil earthly conditions, in this refusal to credit God with acquiescence in earthly evils, and in the civic nature of its ideal."[1] This thought is independent of the extravagant forms in which, in the literature devoted to its exposition, it is dressed.

Finally, the apocalyptic idea conceives salvation as something *given*, coming down from God. Its New Jerusalem is a holy city which descends out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. It may be that in its elaboration of this hope Jewish apocalyptic forgot that God is all the time waiting to be gracious, that the Kingdom of God " is nigh," and that it is man's lack of faith which hinders His operations.[2] Nevertheless in its proclamation of God as the true hope of the world's deliverance, it held on to something which we must never let go. Apocalyptic is right in emphasizing this Givenness of Salvation, and in seeing in the power of God the means of its realization. There are ages in which the world goes forward as if by its own inherent momentum, but there are times of failure, deep and lasting, when humanity

[1] *Practice of Christianity*, by author of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, p. 107.

[2] See especially on this subject, A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, pp. 24-39.

seems sinking, and, when these come, the thing that inspires progress, and keeps hope alight, is the apocalyptist's vision, conceived not very differently from the way in which the Jew conceived it. "When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

NOTE.—In the foregoing discussion no account has been taken of that other and parallel direction along which also eschatological speculation developed, the life after death of *the individual.* The only point where this line of thought has come to the surface was in connection with the Danielic idea of the Kingdom, which, placing the Kingdom beyond the expiration of this world's term, carried with it the thought of individual resurrection. Its emergence there is significant because, as Dr. H. R. Mackintosh has remarked, it was the apocalyptic writers who first "felt that the communal expectation must be supplemented by faith regarding the destiny of individuals after death."[1] In the earlier prophets speculation regarding individual survival does not get beyond the traditional naturalistic belief in Sheol. The ideas associated with life in Sheol, *e.g.* in Hezekiah's hymn (Isa. xxxviii. 9f.), and scattered references elsewhere (Isa. xiv. 11, Job x. 22), explain why the fortunes of the individual could never be a living element in Israel's future hope, and why the attitude to it of individual saints and sages was always one of protest (Psalm xvi. 10-11, Job xix. 25.) It is indeed a proof of the naturalistic origin of the whole conception that the prophets *could never find any place for it in their scheme of redemption, or indeed within the bonds of God's covenant*

[1] *Immortality and the Future*, p. 19.

with His people. The most that national redemption contains for the individual even in such late and semi-apocalyptic passages as Isa. lxv. 17f. is a prolongation of earthly life beyond the accustomed term, under conditions of ideal felicity. And this, of course, is confined to members of the nation then alive.

On the other hand the true, and ultimately victorious, belief in personal immortality takes its rise *within* the bonds of the covenant-relation, and as a protest against its one-sidedness. It was wrung out of the national faith by individual thinkers and sufferers to whom, after a life's communion with God, the abrupt termination of this relation was not only not joyous but unthinkable. Before this belief could establish itself, the naturalistic idea of Sheol had to be abandoned, and this accordingly happens.[1] Sheol disappears from sight, and the thought of personal resurrection to share the life of the Kingdom occupies the foreground of eschatological expectation for the individual. It was natural that the hope of resurrection should find inclusion in the apocalyptic programme, for that programme, by postponing the Kingdom to the end of the existing world-order, and beyond the term of all present analogies, rendered the abolition of death also a consistent and integral part of itself.

II

We may now consider some modern theories of the relation in which the teaching of Jesus stands to these apocalyptic hopes of Judaism. Roughly speaking, these theories fall into three groups.

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, pp. 30ff.

(1) The apocalyptic element in Jesus' teaching is accidental, a mere husk that may be stripped away.

(2) The apocalyptic element is all-essential, the kernel which gives life to everything else.

(3) The apocalyptic element is not genuine in Jesus' teaching, but was imported into the Gospels by the earliest disciples.

The fact that three such different theories can be put forward shows, as we shall see, how extraordinarily complex are our Gospel data.

(1) The modern interest in the question dates from the discovery and opening up of the apocalyptic writings of the later Jewish period. The study of these books, Enoch, 2 Esdras, Baruch, the Sybilline literature, Jubilees, Psalms of Solomon, revealed the fact that many of the eschatological ideas in the Gospels were no purely original product of Christianity, but part of an inherited literary tradition. The first result of this discovery was to provide a way of escape for those to whom the ethical and spiritual constituents of Christ's teaching were the main thing, and the eschatological material a foreign element in which the modern mind could not find itself, but which nevertheless it could not reduce by any allegorising expedients. It was thought that the apo-

calyptic material might be explained legitimately as mere wrappings of Judaism, inevitable adhesions of an older creed from which Jesus' message was in principle detachable. The principle here is that whatever belongs to Judaism is negligible, the essence of Christ's teaching is what remains. In greater or less degree this method of interpretation has come to govern most modern liberal attempts at a critical exposition of Christ's teaching. It is assumed that the process of stripping away can be easily effected. The plant, when lifted out of its original soil, may have something of the old earth clinging to its roots, but nothing hinders the removal of the earth, and the transplanting of the root into the new soil of modern thought. The modern mind has therefore gone to work to strip the old earth from Jesus' thought of the Kingdom of God. It has assumed as axiomatic that if part of Jesus' teaching can be paralleled from the thought of His own time but is comparatively strange to us, while another part is—*ex hypothesi*—original to Himself and in harmony with modern ideas, then the question, What did Jesus mean? solves itself automatically within the latter sphere. In this manner the surd apocalyptic element in the Gospels is removed. The Kingdom of God is denuded

of apocalyptic associations, and interpreted as an ethical condition of life in which faith in the Father and filial acceptance of His will regulate conduct and relationships, and it is assumed that in this restatement all the essential interests of Christ's religion are conserved.

If we look at this theory quite generally, it is impossible not to admit that it contains a good deal that is true. In the first place, whatever value we may find it necessary to set on the apocalyptic beliefs of the early Church, we can still distinguish between their form and their substance. The Parousia-prediction—to take the supreme instance—conveys a thought which we can distinguish ideally from the imagery in which, on the basis of Daniel vii. 13, it is cast. Moreover, the salvation which Jesus brings to men is not in experience so bound up with any imaginative conceptions of future blessedness that it would not have reality and incalculable worth even if the eschatological sections of our Gospels, and of the New Testament generally, did not exist. Many influences, the Resurrection of Jesus, the Johannine teaching, Greek notions of immortality, have affected the future hopes of Christians far more than any Jewish apocalyptic ideas, strictly so-called, whether in the New Testament or elsewhere. The mass of

modern Christians hold the future hope in forms which dispense almost entirely with imaginative material from the latter source, so that, to this extent, the *form* of early Christian eschatology is secondary. But it by no means follows that we can segregate the spiritual and ethical content of Jesus' message, and say that, whereas His apocalyptic ideas belonged to His times, this other element is His own. Christ's *imprimatur* rests on His eschatology as much as on His ethics. His personality is impressed on the conceptions He took over from apocalyptic Judaism.[1] In regarding their *form* as secondary, we must not think that the thoughts which He used them to express were secondary. From this point of view the above interpretation of the matter is unsatisfactory.

(2) Of recent years there has been a pronounced tendency to go to the other extreme, and to say that Christ's adhesion to the apocalyptic doctrines of His day, so far from being accidental or a secondary characteristic of His thought, is the one key which explains it. Those who take this view start from the position that those ethical ideas of the Kingdom, with which modern theology has operated, have their roots not in the Gospel of Jesus but in Kant

[1] Cp. Chap. III. pp. 80f.; V. pp. 137f., VI. pp. 158f.

and the Illuminist philosophy.[1] The Kingdom as preached by Jesus was not, as modern thought imagines, a spiritual society leavening the world with Christian ideas and so carrying it forward to its divine goal. It was a purely apocalyptic conception, a new order, an amazing transformation, conceived in accordance with the eschatology of the times, and coming suddenly like the lightning out of heaven or as a thief in the night. It was no more a matter of present experience or of ethical processes gradually attaining their end than was the Parousia through which it was to come. In the Kingdom the elect would sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which shows that it is a wholly supernatural blessedness that is meant, something transcending all analogy. While Jesus' Gospel was His own in the sense of being grounded in an absolutely unique relation to God and a unique religious experience, it was never, in its thought of the manner in which the Kingdom comes, deflected from the lines of the apocalyptic tradition, nor are we justified in so deflecting it. Apocalyptic is not an accident, but the essential substance of Jesus' teaching.

What this change of view-point means comes out in certain conclusions which now

[1] J. Weiss, *Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, p. V.

inevitably follow. Not only is the modern idea that the Kingdom comes by moral and spiritual progress excluded, but the ethics of Jesus are set on an eschatological basis. The evanescence of the world and all its interests is assumed, an evanescence so immediate that the only thing worth a man's doing is to save himself from this untoward generation.[1] In a similar way, eschatological values are assigned to all those New Testament conceptions by the aid of which Christian experience is found defining itself. For example, "eternal life" (ζωὴ αἰώνιος) is not primarily an ethical or spiritual possession but the life, unexperienced as yet, which belongs to the coming era (αἰών). "Regeneration" (ἀναγέννησις), the idea underlying John iii. 3, is not a spiritual change but the transformation which takes place at the Parousia when, as St. Paul says, we "shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). Again, when St. Paul speaks of the "new creation" (καινὴ κτίσις), which is the result of a man's being "in Christ" (2 Cor. v. 17), he is using the word proleptically, for the real new creation coincides with the Parousia.[2] Those references, all the more suggestive because incidental in their character, show the entirely new reading

[1] Cp. Chap. I. p. 20; Chap. IV. pp. 102, 107-114.

[2] J. Weiss, *op. cit.*, p. 110, note.

of the New Testament which follows from acceptance of the eschatological theory. Finally, by this theory Jesus' relation to the gift of salvation is purely *predictive*.[1] The passages in which He speaks of the Kingdom of God as having a present reality or reference are only proleptic utterances, ecstatic anticipations of events now certain but as yet unrealized.[2]

Exponents of this view have of course recognized that modern theology is within its rights when it claims the liberty to pronounce its own independent judgment on the work of Christ, and when, on the basis of Christian experience, supported by certain articles of His own teaching, it speaks of Jesus as having *inaugurated* the Kingdom as a new Divine life among men. But they hold us bound, in so doing, to recognize the real nature of the liberty we are taking, and not to read into the words of Jesus an idea which, however natural and familiar to us, does not correspond exactly with what Jesus said to His own generation.[3]

It remains to add that this theory has been carried to still greater lengths in Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, where it is applied to the explanation not only of Christ's teaching,

[1] *ibid.* p. 71, "The fundamental character of Jesus' preaching is Prophecy."

[2] *ibid.* p. 90, p. 95.

[3] *ibid.* p. 177.

but of His whole earthly history. "Before the advent of eschatology," says Schweitzer, "critical theology was without a principle of discrimination since it possessed no reagent capable of infallibly separating out modern ideas on the one hand, and genuinely ancient New Testament ideas on the other." Liberal theology, he says, in trying to separate Jesus from the apocalyptic ideas in which He was absorbed, is attempting the impossible. Jesus will not be taken out of His own times, nor naturalized in ours. It is vain to appeal to Him in defence of ideas of the Christian religion which blink the fundamental "world-denial" in which His religion was rooted, and therefore whatever basis modern liberal Christianity may have it cannot be the Jesus of the Gospels. Schweitzer indeed does not deny that the religion of Jesus has supreme significance for us apart from the historical viewpoint in association with which it first comes to us, but he holds that our right to regard it as a religion for the present world comes only by opposing certain fundamental postulates of Jesus, "fighting our way" as he puts it, "through His world-negation." Eschatology, world-negation, is the one key not only to Jesus' teaching, but to His life. He lived in the expectation that He was destined to bring

the world's history to a close, and when that result did not happen, as He expected, in His lifetime, He gave His life in sacrifice that it might be hastened on.

The eschatological theory, taking it as a whole, and leaving out some of the exegetical conclusions to which Schweitzer has pushed it, has undoubtedly founded on real facts, and carried criticism a step in the right direction. It has shown us that world-denial is a fact of the Christian revelation, and it has revealed the passion which lies at the heart of it. It has shown that what Jesus envisaged, and what He called His disciples to envisage with Him, and to seek as the highest of all goods, was nothing less than a new world, a humanity redeemed and new-created by God. It has done a service to our understanding of His ethical and religious teaching by insisting on retaining it within its original context of a redeeming energy put forth by God, and thereby forcing the modern mind to a wider vision of religious possibility as well as to an increased tension of energy. The spectacle of Jesus, following with the whole passion of His soul the ideal of a redeemed humanity, is not only truer to the picture presented in the Gospels than is the Jesus of the liberal theologians, but it is bound to react hopefully

on the lassitude and inertia of the modern Church which has too much settled down to contentment with things as they are. These results, which are independent of the truth or falsehood of the eschatological interpretation in details, may be regarded as so much solid gain for criticism and for religion. All the same, it has to be asked if the eschatologists are right in the construction they have put on this aspect of Jesus' thought and life. What was the real meaning of the *passion* of Jesus, the emotion which made people say of Him at certain moments of His life, "He is beside Himself" (Mark iii. 22), and which amazed the disciples as they were going up to Jerusalem (Mark x. 32)? Was it that something of infinite import, the burden of Jewish revelation, the thing which many kings and righteous men had desired to see, was now only impending, as this theory holds, or was it that that something was already in *operation*? We have to ask the reason of that quickening and freshening of apocalyptic expectation which so distinguishes the Gospels from contemporary Jewish apocalyptic writings. Again, the defenders of the eschatological theory recognize that the Gospel of Jesus has a meaning and a value for *us* apart from the context of apocalyptic beliefs in which it was

delivered. It is difficult to see what meaning there is in this concession unless it implies that what Christ taught in apocalyptic form is fulfilled in terms of present spiritual experience. But if that be so, the question arises whether the right to make this equation is not given us in Christ's own example and teaching. Did Jesus content Himself with confirming the apocalyptic hopes of His own day and giving them a relation to Himself, or did He pass on to set forth their spiritual equivalents ?

(3) There is still one critical theory of Jesus' relation to the apocalyptic beliefs of His own day which has not been considered. Both of the critical methods above discussed assume that the apocalyptic element in the Gospels belongs to the original and authentic tradition of the words and teaching of Christ. The view, however, has been taken that this element in no sense comes from Christ, but was imported into the Gospel tradition by the first generation of His followers. It is put forward as " an instance of the faith of the community working upon the tradition."[1] The earliest disciples glorified their Lord by investing Him with predicates, derived from prophecy, which were not of His choosing, and so there came into the records all those apocalyptic hopes

[1] W. Bousset, *Jesus*, p. 203.

which gather round the future of Christ and His Kingdom. According to Wellhausen the religion of Jesus has its essence in its entire freedom from visionary hopes and conceptions. "Jesus," he says, "completed the process, begun by the prophets of the Old Testament, by which religion was freed from the ecstatic element."[1] His mind, reflecting as in a mirror the eternal ethical relations of God and man, rose clean above the passionate fears and expectations of His time. His Person was only brought into union with eschatology after His death on the basis of Daniel vii. 13, in which the Church saw Him prefigured. To the same views Wellhausen has given later expression in his *Introduction to the First Three Gospels*. His rejection of the Parousia-prediction follows on his rejection of the whole passage, Mark viii. 27—x. 45, which with its announcement of Christ's suffering and resurrection he regards as a later "Christian" addition to the original records of Jesus.[2] In this way the definitely apocalyptic elements in the Gospels are expunged from Christ's teaching, and transferred to the credit of the apostolic Church which identified its Lord with the Danielic Son of Man.

[1] Wellhausen, *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte* p.383.

[2] *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 96.

The main reasons for not believing that this theory is tenable we may leave to the Appendix of the present chapter. It will be shown there that we have as much reason for believing that Jesus uttered the Parousia-prediction as for believing that He spoke any other recorded word. Nothing short of a wholesale excision of passages, such as Wellhausen proposes, can render credible the view that Jesus cut Himself off entirely from the glowing hopes which the Gospels ascribe to Him, and which His Church is found cherishing after His departure.

III

Our review of the various theories which have been put forward in answer to the question, in what relation Jesus stood to the apocalyptic hopes of His time, will have shown us the existence in His teaching of another strain of thought beside the apocalyptic element. It would have been impossible for a scholar like Wellhausen to set aside the apocalyptic element in the tradition if what was left was not something very real, to which the name of Jesus might not unworthily be given. The fact is that our Gospel data in regard to the central question, What did Jesus

mean by the Kingdom, are singularly complex. We find the idea that the Kingdom of God is already in some sense present alternating with the idea that it is still to come. And the question is how we are to explain this fact. Can we find a unifying principle by which the two contrasted ideas are explained and reconciled ?

(1) It is to be noticed that neither Wellhausen in his ethical, nor Weiss in his apocalyptic interpretation of Jesus' teaching is able to support his theory on the basis of *all* the evidence which our Gospels afford. Wellhausen finds it necessary, as we have seen, to reject the whole passage, Mark viii. 27—x. 45, as coming not from Jesus but from His Church ; in fact, he has to reject the whole idea of a Gospel *Christology*. He can only get rid of apocalyptic by denying that Jesus spoke of His own Person or claims. But Weiss also is compelled to bracket certain minor elements in our documents as not agreeing with the view of the Kingdom which on other grounds he attributes to Jesus. Thus he brackets Matthew's parable of the Tares on the ground that its peculiar notion of a Kingdom of Christ existing in the world side by side with a kingdom of evil (Matt. xiii. 38) "is developed from the standpoint of the Church

on the basis of certain Pauline ideas."[1] His admission, however, that the first three Gospels contain traces of that same interpretation of apocalyptic hopes which finds its classical exposition in the Fourth Gospel is of first-rate value. "The process by which the Messianic salvation was transferred to this side of time has already," he says, "begun in the Synoptists."[2] All this goes to show that that antithesis of present and future, ethical and eschatological, conceptions of the Kingdom, which we find in the Gospels, is not to be removed by making distinctions between one Gospel and another in respect of historicity.

(2) Nor is the principle which resolves the antithesis to be found in psychologizing methods which would relate the two contrasted ideas to different periods of Christ's ministry. It will not do to say, for example, that Christ's conception of the Kingdom was at first apocalyptic and later on ethical, as if apocalyptic was a stage which the mind of Jesus presently outgrew. For not only would that cut the connections between Jesus and His Church which is found at the very beginning in possession of a very vivid apocalyptic hope, but it overlooks the fact that it is round the last and most solemn hours of Jesus' life that the

[1] Weiss, *Predigt Jesu*, p. 40. [2] Weiss, *Predigt*, p. 42.

apocalyptic teaching chiefly gathers. It is when Jesus is nearing the end of His ministry, and the shadow of the Cross is falling on the scene, that the light of prophecy rises to its maximum intensity. We cannot therefore regard apocalyptic as simply the swaddling clothes in which the Gospel was cradled but which it outgrew.

(3) Nor can we represent the apocalyptic view as simply the last phase of His teaching, as if our Lord's teaching at first was out of relation to apocalyptic hopes, and only became merged in them when the hope of a present Kingdom of God was disappointed. Certainly as time went on, and the forces of opposition ranged themselves around Jesus, the eschatological note became clearer and more continuous. But there never was a time when this note was not present. It may be true to say, as Dr. D. S. Cairns does, that the Parousia discourse was a symbolic form into which Jesus "flung the reserved elements of His teaching,"[1] but we must also recognize that from the start Jesus' Gospel was cast in the forms of apocalyptic thought. It must be clearly grasped that the Kingdom of God, and the Son of Man, were apocalyptic conceptions. They had a history behind them, and Jesus in using

[1] D. S. Cairns, *Christianity in the Modern World*, p. 200.

them was connecting his "Good News" with definite expectations of the popular mind. From the beginning, then, the teaching of Jesus stands in close relations to apocalyptic hopes and aspirations; apocalyptic and ethical, ethical and apocalyptic ideas of the Kingdom attend one another throughout.

(4) The truth is, as we shall see later, that in Jesus' mind the two conceptions were really one. Religious thought always moves round two *foci*, that of Experience on the one hand, and that of Hope on the other. On the one hand there is no real religious faith which does not include the sense of Divine forces already at work to produce a present salvation. On the other hand, there is no experience of present salvation which does not involve the sense of a *deficit*, a something wanting, which has still to be looked for from the skies. The religious conception always turns on these two factors, experience and hope, ethic and eschatology. A certain polarity is inherent in the very nature of religious thinking. And if the Gospel of Jesus brings before us two phases of the Kingdom, it is because the Kingdom always has two phases, but they are two phases of the same thing.

The complexity of the Gospel data is however partly due to this, that *in Jesus' teaching we*

see a process going on by which apocalyptic ideas are being translated into terms of present and living reality. In the Gospel of Jesus the apocalyptic hopes of Judaism are already being fulfilled. The Kingdom of God draws nigh; the apocalyptic ideal touches earth, so to speak; one link, the first, in the chain of spiritual values of apocalyptic ideas is formed. It is vital to understand and to remember this. When Jesus said "The Kingdom of God is at hand," He meant that what had hitherto only been an ideal or dream was now to become matter of present experience. It is because the Gospels show us this process in the course of taking place that their data in regard to Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God are so various and so complex.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II

WELLHAUSEN'S THEORY

WELLHAUSEN'S theory that Jesus lived entirely above the passionate hopes and fears of His time, and that His Person was only brought into union with apocalyptic hopes after His death on the basis of Daniel vii. 13, in which the Church saw Him prefigured, requires a more detailed examination than was possible within the limits of the foregoing survey. It bases itself on the fact that our Gospels show here and there decided traces of a heightening of the apocalyptic colouring. We find Matthew, for example, imparting apocalyptic touches to the narrative of Mark, introducing the term "Son of Man" in passages where it did not stand in the Marcan record, and the suggestion is made that the whole apocalyptic material of our records originally entered in the same way. The impulse to glorify Jesus opened the door to the whole imaginative material of prophets and apocalyptists. With regard to this view there are certain facts which,

while not amounting to a proof of Wellhausen's contention, show the kind of presuppositions on which it rests.

(1) There can be no doubt of the strong eschatological bias of the early Church, nor of the assiduity displayed in finding points of contact for the new faith in Old Testament prophecy. In this connection Dan. vii. 13 "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, etc." would have an immense influence on the development of thought.[1]

(2) Comparative study of the Synoptic narratives reveals a strong tendency to introduce incidental references to the Parousia or Final Judgment, and to bring them forward into earlier sections of Jesus' teaching.[2] For example, the saying which in Luke vi. 46 runs "Why do ye call Me, Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say?" appears in the parallel passage Matt. vii. 21 as follows, "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord,

[1] See above, Chap. II. pp. 36f., and Chap. V. pp. 130, 149-154.

[2] On this whole subject, see B. H. Streeter, Appendix to *Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (Oxford, 1911), H. T. Andrews, article in *London Theological Studies* (1911) on "The Eschatological Utterances of Jesus," E. von Dobschütz, *Eschatology of the Gospels*, pp. 79-94.

shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." This is a clear case of an eschatological touch being added to the original saying, for it is much more probable on other grounds that Matthew here added to Q than that Luke subtracted from it. In this manner the first Evangelist has drawn the shadow of the impending *end* over the Sermon on the Mount. Again, for Mark's " Until they see the Kingdom of God coming in power " (Mark ix. 1), Matthew has " Until they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom " (Matt. xvi. 28), a reference to the Parousia. Mr. B. H. Streeter, who has examined the evidence, thinks that Matthew represents the culmination in our Gospels of this process. He has not only enhanced the eschatological colouring by what he has added, but also by what he has omitted of sayings of a non-eschatological character. His version of the " Little Apocalypse " in Mark xiii., the turn he has given to certain of the parables in Matt. xiii., the insertion of other parables, relating to the Final Judgment, not found in Mark or Luke, and his liking for apocalyptic phrases, all combine to show the nature of the influences, which, on one side, were working on the original tradition. Mr. Streeter thinks we have least of the eschatological element in Q, more in Mark, most of all in Matthew.

But when all allowance is made for this tendency, it does not amount to a proof that the eschatology of the Gospels is in any real sense an imported element.

(1) The differences we have noted affect only the surface of our documents. If every reference which could be explained in this way were struck out, there would still remain a strong residuum of eschatology.

(2) This element appears in all the sources which criticism is able to distinguish. Q.'s references are of the very distinctest character.[1] Even in the limited area of the "Doubly Attested Sayings" (sayings, that is, common to any two of the three authorities, Mark, Q., and the special sources of Matthew or Luke), instances are to be found. That is to say, apocalyptic utterances formed part of that teaching which most widely impressed Jesus' followers.[2] Even if the "Little Apocalypse" in Mark xiii. were in its present form an addendum to the original tradition, it most certainly employed genuine words of Jesus, and it must have been felt that its introduction supplemented the tradition at a most necessary point.

[1] B. H. Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 430f.

[2] For the significance of the "Doubly Attested Sayings," cp. F. C. Burkitt, *Gospel History and its Transmission*, pp. 167-168.

(3) We have to allow not only for a heightening of the apocalyptic colouring in some parts of our records, but for a corresponding diminishing of the same colouring in others. This is perhaps most clearly exhibited in Luke, who for Mark xiii. 14, "When ye see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not," a reference to Daniel xii. 11, which Matthew as well as Mark conserves, writes "When ye see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that her destruction is nigh," thus resolving a veiled apocalyptic reference into a historical prediction (Luke xxi. 20).

(4) If eschatology had not occupied a central place in the teaching of Jesus, it would be impossible to account for the marked stimulus given to that way of thinking in early Christianity. Eschatology represents a more living and practical motive in early Christian than in Jewish literature. It became so associated with Christianity, in fact, that before long the Jewish authorities renounced the apocalyptic eschatology altogether, and placed their own apocalyptic writings on the Index.[1] It is difficult to see how this change could have taken place, and apocalyptic have become a distinctly Christian thing, unless Jesus in His

[1] F. C. Burkitt, *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, pp. 11f., Baldensperger, *Messianisch-apocalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judentums*, pp. 166f.

Parousia-prediction and elsewhere had given the apocalyptic hopes of Judaism a primary relation to Himself.[1]

We conclude therefore that eschatology forms an integral part of the teaching of Jesus.

[1] F. von Dobschütz, *Eschatology of the Gospels*, pp. 74-75

CHAPTER III

JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THE NEED OF FAITH

1. The study of the Gospels, with a view to discovering the true relation of Jesus to the apocalyptic ideas of His time, yields at the outset a principle which, though subject to qualification by what may hereafter be mentioned, is nevertheless fundamental. That principle is—

Jesus, in proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and applying to Himself the title "Son of Man," was taking up apocalyptic ideas, and giving His Gospel an initial relation to apocalyptic hopes.

Jesus began His preaching of the Kingdom in contact with the Jewish eschatology of the day. The message with which He came forward, "The Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark i. 15) would at once call up the apocalyptic vision in the minds of all to whom it was addressed. That is not to say that in Jesus' day the apocalyptic meaning was the

only one which the term " Kingdom of God " or " Kingdom of Heaven " could bear.[1] The Rabbis used the term " Kingdom of Heaven " sometimes with an inward reference, to denote the abstract supremacy of the Law of God in the heart. Whoever undertook to keep the Law of God was in that sense said to accept the yoke of " the Kingdom of Heaven."[2] The daily recitation of the Shema, with confession of the one God, and an undertaking to keep His commandments (Deut. vi., 4-9, xi. 13-21), was sufficient to make a proselyte a member of the Kingdom of Heaven. Besides this legal sense of the term, there was also another according to which the Kingdom of God signified little more than God's order of Providence. Disappointment with history had the result in many minds of depressing the thought of the Kingdom to " a general idea of the almighty power of God in Nature and human history, though always with special reference to Israel."[3] But while these abstract usages of the term were familiar, no one would associate them with such a proclamation as that with which Jesus began His

[1] The terms are equivalent, Heaven being a favourite euphemism for the Divine name in later Judaism (cp. Dan. iv. 26, Luke xv. 21).

[2] Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 96f.

[3] Barth, *Hauptprobleme des Lebens Jesu*, p. 39.

ministry. Whoever said, "*The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has drawn nigh*" (Mark i. 15), by his very language made it plain that no timeless or abstract interpretation of the term was intended, but that the words were to be taken in their high eschatological or Messianic sense as a reference to the coming era of redemption. What that was, certain references in the literature of the period make clearly evident. "We hope in God our Saviour; for the power of our God is for ever with mercy, and the Kingdom of our God for ever over the nations in judgment" (*Psalms of Solomon*, xvii. 3). "His Kingdom will appear over all creatures, and then will the devil have an end" (*Assumptio Mosis* x. i.) We are justified then in taking the apocalyptic sense of the term "Kingdom of God" as fundamental in Jesus' preaching.

The same truth is implied in Jesus' relation to the message of His forerunner, John the Baptist. Whether apocalyptic ideas and hopes were generally diffused throughout the masses of the people before John came is not known for certain, but there can be no doubt that the result of John's preaching was to set them circulating through the length and breadth of the land, and to raise the whole community, with the exception of the religious

leaders, to the tiptoe of Messianic expectation. In so far indeed as John refused to countenance the national-political ideas of the time, his teaching signifies an abandonment of the *lower* line of Messianic expectancy, but it was for that reason the more consistent an adoption of the higher, apocalyptic idealism, which in the popular mind was not always very clearly distinguished from the other.[1] The very language of John's preaching the wrath to come, the axe laid at the root of the tree, the work of the Coming One who should baptize with fire,[2] the universal call to repentance and readiness—breathes the spirit of apocalyptic. When therefore Jesus attached Himself to this preaching of John, and took up the same initial message, there could be no doubt of the sense in which He intended the word "Kingdom of God" to be understood.

[1] See Chap. I. p. 37.

[2] John in Mark i. 8, says that the Messiah will baptize with "the Holy Spirit." In Matt. iii 11 (=Luke iii. 16) he says He will baptize with "the Holy Spirit and fire." It has been supposed that what the Baptist originally said was fire, and that the Marcan version "with the Holy Spirit" is an interpretation due to the Evangelist's taking John's words as a reference to Jesus. The Baptist, on the other hand, was thinking of nothing more or less than the eschatological Messiah of the current apocalyptic expectation.

Q's reading, "with the Holy Spirit and fire" may thus have originated in a fusion of the original tradition regarding John with the Christian tradition, which saw in His words a direct reference to Jesus. If so, it is an interesting illustration of the relation of Jesus to the apocalyptic ideas of His times. He comes to fulfil in the Spirit the ideals and dreams which they had held in more or less material forms.—See Wellhausen, *Evgm. Matt.*, p. 6.

Apocalyptic supplied *the form, therefore, in which Jesus announced His specific message.* As to the message itself, it rested on something deeper, something inward and prior, the consciousness, as we shall see, of a unique relation to God. When Jesus said "The Kingdom of God is at hand," He was not uttering any theoretical idea reached by calculation of times and seasons as to the *date* of the Messianic era, but expressing the new consciousness, which had become finally clear to Him at His baptism, of being the bearer and bringer of God's salvation. Of this consciousness the announcement of the Kingdom of God was the form, for to the mind of the day the Kingdom of God comprised and connoted the whole salvation of God. Going back for a moment to His experience at His Baptism, and during the Temptation which followed in the wilderness, can we say what light is thrown on the direction of His religious consciousness by these events? We can at least say this, that in His Baptism Jesus became finally certain of His Messianic vocation, and in the Temptation in the Wilderness He definitely renounced the political or worldly idea of that vocation. Mr. B. H. Streeter goes further and says that in the Temptation Jesus, as He laid down the nationalistic

" Christ " ideal, adopted the apocalyptic " Son of Man " ideal in its place.[1] Whether this was done at the Temptation or not, there is no doubt that, as soon as Jesus' Messianic consciousness emerges in His teaching, the " Son of Man " idea is found marking the central line along which that consciousness develops. " Son of Man " in this connection represents the particular form which the sense of being God's Divinely elected Messiah (Mark i. 11) assumed in Jesus' mind. Thus Jesus' own interpretation of His Messianic work and calling took from the start a definitely apocalyptic direction. Dan. vii. 13 forms the point in the Old Testament revelation at which all other prefigurements of His vocation gather and are united.[2]

With this agrees the fact that the majority of references to the Kingdom of God in our documents connect it with distinctively apocalyptic predicates. Apocalyptic distinguished two eras or stages of the world's history, under the power of Satan and under the power of God respectively, and in the Gospels it is to the kingdom of Satan that the Kingdom of God is opposed. Jesus refused to follow the lure of the earthlier line of Messianism, and to oppose

[1] Article on " The Historic Christ " in *Foundations* (1912), p. 101.

[2] See later, Chap V.

the Kingdom of His Father to *Rome* or any other earthly power (Matt. iv. 8f.). He refused to be drawn into the expression of any anti-Roman opinions (Mark xii. 17). He rejected the title "Son of David" as an inadequate designation of His heavenly authority (Mark xii. 35) and the claim, to which He confessed at last before the High Priest, centred round the apocalyptic vision of Dan. vii. 13 (Mark xiv. 62). So also the work He came to do was not to save Israel from her enemies, but to translate men's souls from the power of Satan to the power of God (Matt. xii. 28, Luke xi. 20). The victories of His disciples over the spiritual and bodily ills of men He described symbolically by saying that He had seen Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Luke x. 18). In all this, and in the acceptance of the demon-possession theory, the teaching of Jesus appears in continual contact with the apocalyptic idea, that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness," etc. (Ephes. vi. 12).

With this agrees also that association of the Kingdom with a final manifestation of God which we find in many passages of the Gospels. Jesus, while giving to His Kingdom, as we shall see, a present reference and reality,

lived in the expectation of a dramatic ending to the process of human history, which should coincide with His own return to judge the world, and the arrival of the Kingdom "in power" (Mark ix. 1, Matt. xxv. 31f.). He spoke of His generation as in this connection "unable to discern the signs of the times," so resembling the age of Noah or of Lot (Luke xii. 56). The words in which He often speaks of the Kingdom present it as something which transcends present analogy, and of which the disciples as yet have no experience: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Luke xii. 32). He declared that when the Son of Man came in His glory, and the holy angels with Him, He would say to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34). Even those passages which most inculcate faith in the Father's eternal care and providence are lit up by flashes of apocalyptic lightning. "Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning and be ye yourselves like men that wait for their Lord" (Luke xii. 35). We are accustomed to give those passages which speak of the Lord's Coming a reference to the believer's death and after-life, but while this

may be their meaning on the reduced scale of individual life, they were directed by Jesus to a cosmic event. Jesus did not speak in the first instance of the coming of death to the individual, but of the coming of the Kingdom and His own Parousia, as historical events in time. And, as regards this consummation, He said to His generation, " There be some here of them that stand by which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God come with power " (Mark ix. 1).

All these references are apocalyptic in their character, and now if these were all, or if they explained themselves, it might be possible to fit the teaching of Jesus within the four corners of an apocalyptic doctrine of the future.

2. Here, however, a number of other considerations arise to which also due weight must be given in the attempt to formulate an answer to our initial question, What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God. In the first place, *what was the nature of the conviction which Jesus expressed when He said that the Kingdom of God had " come nigh "* (Mark i. 15) ? He was not, as we have pointed out, uttering any theoretical idea, reached by calculation of times and seasons, as to the *date* of the

Messianic era, but expressing the consciousness, which had become finally clear to Him at His baptism, of being the Messiah, God's Son (Mark i. 11), the bearer and bringer of the promised salvation of God. All the facts as we have them, the closely concatenated sequence of baptism, temptation, and appearance in Galilee, support this hypothesis. On the other hand, this consciousness, which came to Jesus at His baptism, did not fall like a bolt from the blue on a mind which until that time had been a stranger to the thought. It is more natural to suppose that in His baptism the seal was set on convictions which had slowly gathered strength in His mind and now attained a climax. If so, Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God as *near* goes back ultimately to something anterior to His baptism, and this something we cannot otherwise define than as His sense of *God*.

We take the sequence of thought to be this, that God was so real to Jesus, so close, so immediate, so interfused in all things, that *to pass from this consciousness to the thought of God's idea as already realized in the world was but a single step*. The consciousness of God in which Jesus lived and moved contained in potency the full realization of God's plan of redemption for mankind, nor is there any

doubt as to what that consciousness was. It was the filial consciousness, hinted at in Luke ii. 49, and openly disclosed in Matt. xi. 25-27 (=Luke x. 21-22). The declarations made in this passage rest not on the momentary glimpse of a truth which was not habitual to Jesus' mind, but are rather the welling up of convictions which were always present and which formed the continuous substratum of His consciousness. On the one hand, Jesus knew Himself to be living in completest harmony with the mind and will of God. On the other hand He was just as conscious that in the men around Him this harmony was non-existent or broken. But in the sense of having and possessing God Himself He had the assurance that God's idea for humanity could not be long hindered. He had only to reveal God to men, and the Kingdom would have come. This which we may take to be the ultimate connection between the filial consciousness of Jesus and the proclamation of the nearness of the Kingdom was, of course, powerfully reinforced by the baptism-experience in which Jesus' thought of His vocation attained final Divine certainty, and Jesus in proclaiming the nearness of the Kingdom was reserving the thought of whatever mediatorial work it devolved on Him to do. But we can see how

His message, originating as it did in His peculiar filial consciousness, was from the start independent of the apocalyptic language in which it was delivered, and signifies already a transcending of that distance between God and man which was the presupposition of Jewish apocalyptic ideas.

All the more have we to ask, in the second place, why Jesus' thought of God's idea, God's plan of salvation for humanity, expressed itself, as soon as it became articulate, in apocalyptic phraseology. Why did He take up the apocalyptic conception of the Kingdom of God, and say that this idea was now to be fulfilled in Him? In the light of certain features of His teaching, an answer to that question also may with fair confidence be given.

Jesus chose the apocalyptic form of expression because better than any other existing in His time it enabled Him to present a spiritual idea of God's Kingdom and His righteousness.

That Jesus made a choice is seen in the fact that in His temptation He definitely set aside the popular conception of the Messiah who as Wonder-worker should dazzle His times by the material attributes of royalty, or as Warrior should head them against their enemies, and adopted instead another ideal which soon finds

expression in the title "Son of Man." We cannot connect this rejection of the earthly "Christ" ideal with the subsequent adoption of the "Son of Man" ideal without seeing that the latter gave Jesus opportunities of a spiritual self-expression which were denied Him by the former. We might infer as much from the "Son of Man" idea which, as opposed to the national-Davidic idea, stands for the Heavenly Messiah whose Kingdom is not of this world, but of God. Jesus, in adopting the higher strain of apocalyptic thought as the medium of His teaching, was making a choice which, taught by Him, we have learned to call spiritual.

> "The Kingdom that I seek
> Is Thine, so let the way
> That leads to it be Thine."

The fact that Jesus was making a choice in His adoption of the apocalyptic line of thought comes out also in *the progressive reaction of His own mind on the chosen vehicle of expression.* There is nothing, in Christ's preaching, of those eudaemonistic traits in which apocalyptists of the time portrayed the blessedness of the coming Kingdom. Instead we find a consistent concentration on the spiritual qualities to which the Kingdom is promised, and undeviating insistence on the righteousness in which its life consists. If Jesus derived from His own

consciousness of God the certainty that God's Kingdom could no longer be delayed, it follows that He would present the Kingdom to men as fellowship with God, and this is what we consistently find. The elect, the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 22, 27), to whom the Kingdom is offered, are those whose character is set forth in the Beatitudes (Matt. v. 2f.). Jesus could relate the teaching of the Beatitudes to the apocalyptic view of the Kingdom. He could not equally relate it to any other alternative which presented itself in His day, otherwise He would not have retained the apocalyptic form. At the same time He is *spiritualizing* the content of the apocalyptic vision. It is another proof of the same spiritual tendency that we find less in Jesus of the contrast of two ages, which was so marked a feature of apocalyptic teaching, and more recognition of a dualism in human nature, an opposition of two spirits in the same individual or society, in the overcoming of which for God lies the true salvation of the individual. It is for this reason that Christ says, that when He casts out the evil spirit from a man, the Kingdom of God is come (Matt. xii. 28, Luke xi. 20).[1] In the same quarter also we must look for the explanation of His word to the Pharisees,

[1] Cp. later, p. 84.

"Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is ἐντὸς ὑμῶν" (Luke xvii. 21). The eschatologists contend that there is nothing here which is at variance with their interpretation of the Kingdom, for what Jesus meant was, "You are not to look for external signs of the Kingdom because, ere ever you are aware, like the lightning flash the Kingdom has come, is among you." But it is difficult to see how, on this interpretation, the words ἐντὸς ὑμῶν are in place. The natural phrase would have been ἐν ὑμῖν. On the other hand, if Jesus was emphasizing the inward reference of the Kingdom, the strong word ἐντὸς is explained. We should then understand Him to say in substance this: "You are looking outwards for the New Heaven and the New Earth. In reality they exist within. Every man has potentially within him the New Heaven and the New Earth. The Kingdom of God is within you." Jesus therefore is directing the apocalyptic hope to an inward and spiritual fulfilment, and He chose the apocalyptic form of expression because it was capable of this inward turn, of being bent in a spiritual direction.

And so throughout. Even in those passages where apocalyptic predicates are retained

in apparently their most literal sense, as when Jesus speaks of the redeemed sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom, or of the disciples sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, the primary spiritual character of the Kingdom is retained, and the thought is, *the Kingdom which Jesus expounds and which He brings to men is the Kingdom of which prophets and apocalyptists had dreamed.*

> "The Kingdom that I seek
> Is Thine, so let the way
> That leads to it be Thine."

3. We come now to a third point which is absolutely determinative for Jesus' relation to the apocalyptic hopes of His time.

Jesus represents the apocalyptic hope of the Kingdom as already being fulfilled in the new redemptive forces of which He is conscious in Himself, and in the new life, involving power from on high, into which men enter through Him.

It is not possible to read the Gospels, and carry through the idea that Jesus' relation to salvation was purely predictive or prophetic, as though everything were held up until the day when He should come on the clouds of Heaven. The Jesus of the Gospels not only preaches but inaugurates the Kingdom. He is conscious

of new redemptive powers going forth from Himself which signify the realization of the Divine idea. He draws attention to His work as the fulfilment of the dreams of prophets and saints. In evidence there is the well-known saying (Matt. xii. 28=Luke xi. 20) " If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God is come (ἔφθασεν) upon you." It is needless to inquire what ἔφθασεν corresponds to in the original Aramaic of Jesus, for the meaning is given in the illustration, which is annexed, of the strong man's house invaded by a stronger. The thought is that the Kingdom of God and the dominion of Satan are absolute alternatives, and that where the one is driven back the other comes. Jesus regarded the new powers thus liberated in Himself for the overcoming of moral and physical evil as a definite indication of a new ingress of God in human life, marking a fresh era, and making all things new, and we must either say that in this He gave the term " Kingdom of God " a stretch of meaning which takes it out of the limits of the apocalyptic usage, or that He saw the apocalyptic hope *fulfilled* in Himself. For more than one reason the latter view, as the more natural, is to be preferred.

It agrees with this that when John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus to inquire if

Jesus were really "He that should come," the Messiah who was to bring redemption to His people, Jesus pointed simply to His work in the present (Matt. xi. 4, Luke vii. 22), thereby holding up a warning finger against "any Messianic expectation which in its high-flying had lost sense and understanding of that which to Jesus was highest and divinest."[1] It is possible that the Baptist, with his purely apocalyptic outlook on the future, failed to recognise in Jesus the signs of his Fire-Messiah (see page 71, note), and that this is the point of Jesus' rebuke. In any case the evidence for the Kingdom of God is considered as residing in present facts and processes. In accordance with the same thought Jesus said to His own disciples, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see" (Luke x. 23), concentrating all attention again upon present fulfilment. Most noticeable of all, there is the word about John, the greatest of women-born, being less than "the least in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28). Why is John less than the least in the Kingdom of Heaven? Because to John and all before him the Kingdom was an object of expectation only, whereas to the least of those in the Kingdom its powers and privileges are already an assured

[1] H. J. Holtzmann, *Synoptiker*, p. 41.

possession and *experience*. The Baptist's prediction of the Kingdom was fulfilled, and himself superseded, because in Jesus there was One whose faith realized what had hitherto been only an ideal of fervent minds.

It may be objected, from the side of the eschatologists, that such utterances of Jesus as we have considered are the exception, not the rule, and are to be understood only as proleptic.[1] It is fair to answer that the truth of words does not depend on the frequency of their occurrence, nor even upon their *prima facie* consistency with everything else we know. The eschatologists, in denying that Jesus could have spoken of the Kingdom as already present, may be thereby begging the whole question. Even if their contention were admitted, it is plain that we have in the above utterances of Jesus something which is of far greater importance than the question whether the Kingdom of God had for Jesus a present, or only a future reality. Jesus *might* never have spoken of the Kingdom as already fulfilled in Him, and yet the new life which He gave to men, and which they were conscious of receiving from Him would still be of sufficient importance to become the central thing in Christian experience, and to give the Church the right

[1] Cp. Chap. II., p. 50.

to believe that in Jesus God's salvation had come. But, as we have seen, this right, this liberty which the Church has always claimed to regard its spiritual life and experience as the real verification of Jesus' faith in the future, goes back ultimately to Christ Himself, and to those sayings in which He identified the coming of the Kingdom with the results of His own work on earth.

Nor does it discount the force of such sayings to plead that they were uttered in rare moments of emotion when the Saviour "already seemed to see the victory in His hand, and the prince of this world at His feet."[1] It is quite true that they were uttered in culminating moments of His life, but to say that they were uttered in culminating moments of experience is to say that they were culminating facts of His consciousness, and they have a right to their full value in any critical estimate of His teaching. Now one radical defect of the eschatological theory is that it ignores the full force of such sayings, and gives us a Jesus whose work was wholly prophetic, and whose predominant interest was all in the future. That theory breaks down absolutely on the fact of Christian experience, the new life which Jesus gives to men, a fact which is as real as any in

[1] Weiss, *Predigt Jesu*, p. 41.

the world. St. Paul can even say, "If any man is in Christ, it is a new creation," *i.e*, the apocalyptic hope is realized (2 Cor. v. 17). It is impossible to eject this experience from the central content of Christianity, or to say that, in Christ's view, it was only preparatory or conditional of something else which had not yet appeared.

It would be truer to say that these words of Christ, about the Kingdom being already present, are utterances of *Faith*. It is to faith the Kingdom is promised, and *Jesus by His faith in God made it appear that all this that prophets and apocalyptists had dreamed of, and kings and righteous men had desired to see, was only waiting on the faith of men in order to become real.* Jesus' great demand, therefore, from His followers was faith. We read that in certain cases He was able to do no "mighty work" because a proper faith was not evinced (Mark vi. 5, Matt. xiii. 58). On the other hand He promised that where true faith was present, even in the least degree, it would work amazing results (Matt. xvii. 20). What is this faith? Not intellectual persuasion of the reality of the spiritual world, nor even enjoyment of the subjective experience of religion, the repose or peace of mind which flows from trust in God. Faith means trust in the present

power of God, appropriation of that power as put forth for man's salvation now. It is intelligent subordination to God (Matt. viii. 10f.). It is the quality which St. Paul desiderates when he asks Christians to work out their own salvation, since it is God that works in them both will and deed on behalf of His own ideal or purpose (Phil. ii. 12). It is co-operation with God (1 Cor. iii. 8 ; 2 Cor. vi. 1). It is creative faith, the faith which gives reality to God's idea (Heb. xi. 1). Jesus asked for nothing less than this when He said, " When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth ? " (Luke xviii. 8). Here again we find the contrast between Jesus and the apocalyptic thought of His day. The Jews required a sign (1 Cor. i. 22). They envisaged God's saving power, but it was in miraculous forms remote from everyday reality. Therefore the ideal of their dreams remained an ideal. Jesus thought of the power of God as put forth to save the world. He said that all things were possible to him who believed (Mark ix. 23). These words may have primarily referred to Himself in the passage from which they are taken, but as we know from other words in the same strain their application is general. It was this belief in the power of faith which enabled Jesus to speak

of the Kingdom as nigh, and to set it in relation to present processes of history.

Jesus' thought of the Kingdom differs, therefore, from the apocalyptic idea. But it does not yet follow that it was brought by Him into line with processes which we call evolutionary. Of progress or evolution, *apart from God and faith in God*, He does not speak at all, nor does He suggest that history itself serves the ends of God's Kingdom. On the other hand, God's will to establish the Kingdom and human faith to receive it being assumed, there are certain words of Jesus of which the only natural interpretation is that He *did* regard time and progress as allies or co-efficients of the spiritual progress which brings about the Kingdom. These words we shall have to consider in the section which now follows. It is enough for the present to have made out that Jesus regarded the will of God to establish the Kingdom as operative in Himself, and as producing present results in human life through faith.

It is from this point of view that we must approach that new interpretation of eschatology which, rising later, finds its characteristic expression in the Fourth Gospel. If the centre of interest in Jesus' teaching had all been in the future, it would be impossible to account

either for the way in which the Fourth Gospel came to be written, or for the way in which the Church survived, without detriment to its faith, the non-fulfilment of the Parousia-prediction. As it is, we see the Fourth Gospel calmly translating eschatological ideas into terms of present experience, and, while not abandoning the thought of Christ's Return, assigning spiritual values to such conceptions as Christ's Presence (xiv. 23 ; xvii. 23), Eternal Life (v. 24 ; xvii. 3), the Divine Judgment of the World (iii. 18-19), and Resurrection (xi. 25-26), though not thereby exhausting their meaning, or denying them an eschatological correlate (v. 28-29).[1] And this, too, is the attitude of the New Testament Church, which sees in its present experience something of first-rate worth, a rock beneath its feet, an assurance from the standpoint of which it can regard with comparative equanimity the prorogation of the Lord's return. The mental state of the New Testament Church is not one of *suspense*, the hanging on to a hope which has not in any sense been fulfilled. It has indeed its anchor within the veil (Heb. vi. 19), its sure and steadfast hope of a greater inheritance than was yet won (1 John iii. 2).

[1] Cp. E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*, pp. 213f., 238f., 300f., ; E. von Dobschütz, *Eschatology of the Gospels*, pp. 3-33.

But the Church of the New Testament has more than one anchor. It has its anchor of experience as well as of hope. While believers are still said to "wait" for the Adoption, the Redemption, the Deliverance (Rom. viii. 23-24), they have already an "earnest" of them (2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 14). They can already say that God has "translated" them into "the Kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. i. 13-14; 1 Thess. ii. 12).

4. How did Jesus relate the present phase of the Kingdom's existence to that other and final phase which also finds place in His thought, and which remains surrounded by a mass of apocalyptic predicates (see above, p. 73f.)? Here we find the true *locus* of those parables which, like the Seed Growing Secretly, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, and the Tares, are both by traditional designation and inner identity of subject classified together as Parables of the Kingdom. It is true that our right to regard them in this light has been disputed on critical grounds. It is argued that Mark's original combination of parables, the Sower (iv. 1-20), the Seed Growing Secretly (iv. 26-29), and the Mustard Seed (iv. 30-32), were intended by Jesus to illustrate, not the nature of the Kingdom, but "the fortunes of the Word

as preached."[1] The idea that they unfold an esoteric doctrine of the Kingdom is due, Weiss thinks, to abuse of the formulas "So is the Kingdom of God" (iv. 26), and "Whereunto shall we liken the Kingdom of God?" (iv. 30), which might easily slip in at wrong places, and give rise to the fixed idea that *all* parables related to the Kingdom.

In answer to this argument, which forms one of the keystones of the eschatological position, it must be pointed out that, while the formula "So is the Kingdom of God" might easily slip into inappropriate contexts, yet, if we know anything at all of Jesus, we know that He taught in parables about the Kingdom, and that His teaching was understood to involve "mysteries." We should expect Him to have had His own secret, and there is as much reason for believing Him to have used the word μυστήριον or μυστήρια in connection with the Kingdom (Mark iv. 11; Matt. xiii. 11; Luke viii. 10) as to have spoken any other words in our records. Those only can put a query against them who hold that Jesus could not have spoken of the Kingdom in any other sense than His contemporaries, who hold in fact that His mind could not have reacted on the form which it adopted. For if

[1] Weiss, *Predigt*, pp. 47, 48.

Jesus gave the term a new character, or if He assigned to it an unwonted breadth of reference, there would inevitably arise a difficulty in understanding Him, which He would have to remove. Even supposing that the parables in question referred not to the inner nature of the Kingdom but to the fortunes of the Gospel message, there still remains the phrase, "the *μυστήριον* of the Kingdom," which requires explanation. It did not arise, we may well believe, by accident. It is associated with unforgettable words of Jesus about the spiritual blindness of the people, words occurring in a passage whose extremely paradoxical character is the evidence of its genuineness,[1] and so it would appear that the aspect of His teaching about the Kingdom which perplexed the many was one which it required some spiritual insight to apprehend. Now what was this aspect, this secret of the Kingdom which His parables were intended to unfold? It cannot have been the nature of the life which His followers would lead in the new aeon, for on this topic Jesus practised a reserve in marked contrast with the apocalyptic literature of the period, and with other books which, like the Book of Revelation, were

[1] Mark iv. 11, 12, where the intention of the parables is said to be to blind the people to the truth.

produced later in the bosom of the Christian Church. Jesus never drew aside the veil which hides the unknown future from men's eyes, except to say " In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, etc." To the man who asked, " Lord, are there few that be saved ? " He answered, " Strive to enter in at the strait gate ! " Jesus is interested, that is, and He will have His hearers interested, only in the ethical and spiritual implicates of the life to be. Nor, again, can the " mystery " have referred to the apocalyptic coming of the Kingdom, for on that subject there was only too great consensus of opinion already. The minds of the twelve were saturated with apocalyptic expectation, carried over from the preaching of John or from other sources, and it is more than probable that their own slowness to entertain the new thought which Jesus was teaching them was due, not to any difficulty in the parables themselves, but to the conflict between the thought of the Kingdom there presented, and their own cherished ideas. We need have no hesitation in concluding that the point of these parables, and at the same time the " mystery " of the Kingdom, lay in the paradox involved in supposing that the Kingdom of Heaven itself was already existent on earth. It agrees with

Jesus' situation at this time that the question which was uppermost in His mind was how to relate the present results of His work to the new era which God was to bring in on earth, and His answer is that God's idea is already cast into the processes of history as the seed is cast into the ground. The event, the harvest, will inevitably come.

It would be a mistake indeed to suppose that Jesus was thinking of the slowness or long duration of the process by which the Kingdom would come. Jesus' object is to illustrate the Divine mystery and inevitability, the essential independence of all human effort, by which the ultimate end of the process comes. As the corn-blade shoots rapidly into the ear, and as the yeast rapidly leavens the whole mass of dough, so before men realized, within the brief period of that generation (Mark ix. 1), the Kingdom would be on them. But while the Parables thus emphasized the God-givenness of the start, and the Divine inevitability of the approaching end, they also imply the continuity of the process. It is here we have our justification for thinking that the Kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus, is not out of relation to what we have learned to call the evolutionary process. While apocalyptic insists on the abrupt discontinuity of this world's life and the

Kingdom, Jesus teaches that there is a spiritual life here, the inception of which is the guarantee that sooner or later God's purpose for the world will be effected.

Accordingly we are justified in asserting the following principle :

5. *The Gospel of Jesus, by presenting the Kingdom as something already cast like a seed into the ground, breaks through the moulds of apocalyptic thought, and diffuses itself in the world as a religion of realized redemption.*

There are great sections of Jesus' teaching which seem unaffected by eschatological considerations of any kind, over which the light of God's love and grace shimmers with a lustre and serenity which have no parallel in apocalyptic literature. When one passes from this literature to the Gospel, it is as if one had emerged from the twilight of solar eclipse into the full glory of meridian sunshine. What, for example, has eschatology to do with Christ's teaching about the Fatherly Goodness of God, about Prayer, about Forgiveness, about the Divine Renewal of the Penitent ? Very different is Christ's thought of God's intimate nearness to His world and to His children from that cold distance to which the later Jewish theology had removed Him,

and which apocalyptic made a vain attempt to reduce. While to the apocalyptist God's dwelling with His people was a far-off event of which he could only say that it would come in the last days, to Jesus Himself it was an every-day reality, and so He presented God to men. Apocalyptic was at best a kind of Jacob's ladder, set up to reach from earth to heaven, but neither touching earth at one end, nor rightly grasping heaven at the other. The Gospel of Jesus brings God into daily contact with the lives of men (John i. 51).

It has been shown that the later apocalyptic developments of Judaism represented a strong reaction against the severely transcendent doctrine of God which prevailed in those days.[1] It was a protest in the name of religion against a theology which threatened to extinguish spiritual life. "If there was still a hearth at which the heart-flame might feed itself, it was the Messianic hope." But it can also be shown how signally in most of its manifestations apocalyptic failed to bridge the gulf between man and God, or to melt the coldness of contemporary theology. So long as God's presence in the world He had made was overlooked, not all the imagery, not all the glowing

[1] Baldensperger, *Die Messianisch-apocalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judentums*, p. 78f.

radiance of the language in which the glories of Heaven were depicted, could infuse religious warmth into world-despairing hearts. What Enoch says of the Palace of Heaven, "It was hot as fire, and cold as snow, and nothing of the joy of life was in it. Fear came over me, and terror laid hold upon me" (Enoch xiv. 13), applies very well, as Baldensperger says, to this whole artificial product of Judaism. Certainly a much simpler and warmer piety accompanied the more popular forms of apocalyptic religion, such as we find in the hymns of Mary and Zacharias in Luke (i. 46f., 67f.), yet as a system apocalyptic did not succeed in breaking down the frigidness of legalism, or in bringing the joy of God into the lives of men. The first presupposition of its distinctive quality was that God had *abandoned* the present world, that His operations in it were suspended, that His love and goodness, as well as His power and judgment, were held in reserve against the day of His appearing.

How different it is with the Gospel of Jesus! There the God to whom men look for the fulfilment of the eschatological hope, to whom they pray "Thy Kingdom come!" is their Father who is in Heaven (Matt. vi. 9). Without their Father not a sparrow falleth to the ground. The hairs of their head are all

numbered. Human love, in its highest, most sacred forms, is but the faint reflection of the love of the Father in Heaven (Matt. vii. 11 etc.). He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good (Matt. v. 45). There is joy in His presence over one sinner that repenteth (Luke xv. 7, etc). There is no place in the rigid eschatological scheme for the simple elements of piety which Jesus taught His disciples. We cannot limit His Gospel to a doctrine of a purely future Kingdom without dispersing and sacrificing almost everything that formed the daily subject of precept and exposition. On the other hand, all these topics acquire new point and forcefulness when we consider them in relation to a Kingdom already realized and existing.

The immanence of God in nature, His providence in human life, His giving of the Spirit to all who love Him, above all His saving grace to the sinful, are all essential thoughts of Jesus, and they are all inferential from the thought of the Kingdom as *come*. The Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, the teaching about Prayer and Trust in God, the Lord's Prayer and the Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, and words like " The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," or " Come unto

Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden," owe their immediate power in experience to the place they occupy in the same present context of Divine grace.

The teaching of Jesus, therefore, will not be compressed within the limits of an apocalyptic doctrine of the Kingdom. When the sun rises, not only do the frosts yield, but the mists disperse. The religion of Jesus, in its grasp and possession of God, was incompatible not only with the frigid inertia of Jewish legalism, but with the vague romanticism and unsubstantial pageantry of Jewish apocalyptic.

CHAPTER IV

THE ETHICAL TEACHING OF CHRIST CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO HIS DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM

We have seen that the holders of the eschatological theory attribute to Jesus, in respect of His ethical teaching, no further purpose than to provide such rules and directions for His disciples as were suited to the extreme situation in which His belief in the immediate nearness of the End placed them (Chap. I. p. 20f., II. p. 49). It is not a case, they aver, of an absolute law of life being given to a society supposed to be living under normal conditions, or conserving its accustomed interests within the framework of the existing order. What we have is really an *interim* or provisional legislation adapted to the quite exceptional crisis in which Jesus and His followers conceived themselves to be. It is to be noticed that this conclusion is arrived at, not by deduction from Jesus' outlook on the future, but inductively and independently by regard to the character of His ethical demand.[1] This is interesting

[1] Weiss, *Predigt*, pp. 135-154.

because it brings the Interim-Ethic theory into line with the modern widespread spirit of reaction against the moral ideals of Jesus. Recent thought has not hesitated to impugn the Christian idea of life, to call in question its superiority, and to mark its supposed defects. In the general spirit of its criticism more than one line of argument can be traced, but at heart they are one—unbelief in Christ's law of conduct as a practicable or, at least, a sufficient ideal of life.

There is, in the first place, the plea that Christ's ethical standard makes too great demands on average human nature to be in any real sense a practicable law of life. This idea is in itself as far removed from Nietzsche's position as it is well possible to imagine, Neitzsche's contention being that Christian morality is too *low*, too servile, to mark the true direction of the heroically aspiring will. Nevertheless it has coalesced in modern thought with certain strains derived from Nietzsche, and has produced the idea that the Christian ideal of sacrifice, the law of the Cross, is inhuman. In an imaginative scene in one of the greatest of modern European novels an objector is made to take Christ to task for *overestimating man's capacity to suffer and forgo*. Speaking of the Temptation in the Wilderness, the objector

says: "Thou didst reply (to the wise and dread spirit) that man lives not by bread alone. But dost Thou know that for the sake of that earthly bread the spirit of the earth will rise up against Thee and will strive with Thee and overcome Thee? . . . Thou didst promise men the bread of heaven, but can it compare with earthly bread in the eyes of the weak, ever sinful and ignoble race of men? And if for the sake of the bread of Heaven thousands and tens of thousands shall follow Thee, what is to become of the millions and tens of thousands of millions *who will not have the strength* to forgo the earthly bread for the sake of the heavenly?"[1] The argument thus dramatically stated is traced back to the spirit of modern materialism, and there can be no doubt it expresses a widely-diffused opinion as to the practicability of the Christian ethic from a certain point of view.

Then there is the idea that Christ lived and taught in Galilee, whereas we live under very different conditions. "What Jesus offers," says Naumann, "is adoption to be children of God in Galilee." It is a far cry from the relatively simple conditions of that place and time to the highly complex and intricate relations of life in a capitalistic age, and

[1] Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Eng. trans., pp. 266f.

Naumann uses this fact to refute the idea that Christ's precepts are capable of literal fulfilment in our modern day. How are we to-day to sell all that we have and give to the poor, or to take no thought for the morrow, not asking, "What shall we eat? or What shall we drink?" The professing Christianity of to-day, he argues, has not acted on these principles, however much it may uphold them. The reason is that they abstract from all these complicated conditions of life under which the modern man exists.[1]

Finally—to mention only one other argument—there is the widespread idea that Christ's teaching, by leaving out of sight those political and other complexes in which the life of great modern states is lived, provides no adequate guidance for the various duties and problems arising out of these relations. In Jesus' day the Roman power which maintained universal peace and order was so distant, so far removed from the circle of interests of the ordinary Jew or Galilean, that he had no more to do with it or with its affairs than he had to do with Fate. But it is different in the great states and social complexes of to-day, which in greater or less degree represent the will, and require the moral support, of the individual.

[1] F. Naumann, *Briefe über Religion*, p. 58f.

Christ's View of the Kingdom of God

J. S. Mill, in his time, made it a charge against Christianity that while providing a perfect moral ideal for the individual, considered by himself, it left him without a principle of guidance for those public-spirited civic and social duties which inevitably devolve upon him to-day. The ethics of patriotism and civic duty had to be derived, he said, more from Greek and Roman moralists than from Christ.[1] More recently the same objection has been raised in an accentuated form by thinkers who start from the fact of the State and maintain that the State has an ethic of its own which is utterly distinct from, and not to be confused with, the ethic of the individual. "Not our entire morality," says one of the writers above-mentioned, "is rooted in the Gospel, but only a part of it, although an extremely important and easily despised constituent. Beside the Gospel there are demands of power and of right without which human society cannot exist." "Primitive Christianity," he goes on, "attached no value to the preservation of the State, Law, Organisation, Production. It simply does not reflect on the conditions of human society." Human society must, however, take account of these things, and so this writer argues that the State must be

[1] J. S. Mill, *Essay on Liberty.*

left to work out its own salvation on the plane of the natural struggle for existence. "We do not consult Jesus, when we are concerned with things which belong to the domain of State organization and political economy." [1]

Our answer to this criticism we must leave for the moment. It will be found that, while applying to certain traditional modes of representing Christianity, it *forgets the context in which Christ's ethical teaching was given, the context marked by the term "Kingdom of God."* Our interest in it here relates to the fact that precisely the same ideas in a somewhat altered form reappear in the Interim-Ethic theory; only whereas other theorists are content to state the supposed limitations of Christ's ethic without assigning a reason, the eschatologists have their own explanation to offer. We have first of all therefore to examine whether this explanation is right, whether it is really true that Christ's ethical teaching is conditioned by belief in the immediate nearness of the end.

The eschatologists do not indeed assert that the whole ethic of Jesus is to be explained in this way. There are elements, such as the love of God and one's neighbour, which have their

[1] F. Naumann, *op. cit.*, 68f., 86f. The citations and translation are from von Hügel, *The German Soul*, p. 51f.

origin outside the circle of immediate eschatological interests. But the greater part of Jesus' ethical demand, and precisely that part to which there is no parallel elsewhere, is held to be a consequence of His belief in the swift passing away of this world. Jesus' demands are not directed, it is said, to the ideal of a perfected human society, nor derived from principles on which such a society might be established, but are founded on the absolute fatefulness of the situation which He envisaged.[1] Weiss thinks thereby to account partly for that *indifference to the world, its work, interests, and relationships, which Jesus' ethical requirements involve*, and partly for the unsystematic character of His teaching as a whole. At a moment when the whole existing fabric of things was sinking into dissolution, the one thing needful was to sunder every tie, and be ready, as soon as the hour should strike, to enter into the Kingdom. So Jesus asked the rich ruler to sell all that he had and give to the poor, and so to all He says, " If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple " (Luke xiv. 26).

Jesus, according to this view, did not con-

[1] Weiss, *Predigt*, p. 138.

template a situation which made it necessary either to point out the ethical ends which property might serve, or to indicate the ideal ethical and religious points of view in which men should live as members of a human society. The task of every disciple was to save himself from this present evil world as Noah saved himself from the Deluge or righteous Lot from Sodom. The principle of loving enemies, and not resisting evil, is dictated by regard to this situation. The enmity, the persecution, the malice, which are not to be requited, are all part of the tribulation or temptation (πειρασμός), which, according to the apocalyptic view, awaits those on whom the ends of the world are come. Weiss says expressly that the love and non-retaliatory spirit asked by Jesus are not such as either the ordinary conditions of life in this world render necessary, or a man's capacity renders possible, "without such an enhancement or heightening of the powers of the soul as is promised against the final tribulation."[1]

When we consider this interpretation of the ethic of Jesus, we see that it neither explains the whole of the facts, nor clears up any of the real difficulties. It does not clear up any of the real difficulties because, though certain world-

[1] Weiss, *Predigt*, p. 150.

renouncing elements in Jesus' teaching *might* be explained by belief in the nearness of the end, the soul of man would not feel that it was therefore done with them, or that what was spoken under a sense of the immediate nearness of the end did not retain its authority when that particular motive was removed, and the term of the world's life indefinitely protracted. In fact, to call the ethic of Jesus Interim-Ethic is no explanation of the *greatness* of its demand, because *all ethic is in a sense Interim-Ethic*, "the fashion of this world passeth away" for us all. When we come to consider what part of Jesus' ethical teaching is *expressly* connected with the thought that the end is near, we shall find that it is singularly slight.

There is a section of Christ's ethical teaching of which the fundamental principle is separation, in a certain sense, from the world. A man cannot serve two masters. He cannot serve God and Mammon. But it may be asked whether that, for the sake of which he is asked to give up the world, is his salvation *eschatologically* understood, or whether the giving up has any essential connection with the *transitoriness* of the present order. Is it a new life in another world that is promised as the reward of obedience to Christ, or is it in the

first instance a new life here and now? Christ said to the rich ruler that by selling all that he had and giving to the poor he would have "treasure in heaven," but was regard for the man's religious interest here and now not part of His motive for so dealing with him, not to speak of regard for the poverty of others? Did He not add, "And come, take up the cross, and *follow Me*" (Mark x. 21)? It is difficult to think that consideration of the young man's immediate welfare, religious values in the broadest sense, were not present in a command which, in the absence of the eschatological motive altogether, still speaks with power to the conscience. Again, the saying, occurring in the same chapter of Mark, that he who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for Christ's sake shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time with persecutions, and in the age to come the life that belongs to that age (Mark x. 30), does not, on the face of it, suggest the immediate cessation of the institutions or relationships of this world. There is of course such a thing as Interim-Ethic, and it is present in the New Testament. We have St. Paul's word to the Corinthians, "This I say, brethren, that the time is foreshortened; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though

they had none ; and they that weep as though they wept not ; they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not ; they that buy as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of the world passeth away " (1 Cor. vii. 29-31). But while St. Paul uses such an argument, it is not adduced in connection with Christ's most distinctive ethical pronouncements. There occurs indeed the repeated injunction to be ready against the Son of Man's coming (Mark x. 33, 35 ; Matt. xxiv. 44, 46 ; xxv. 13 ; Luke xxi. 34f. etc.), but it is not the Son of Man's coming that gives necessity to the attitude of mind there inculcated, but its own intrinsic and enduring spiritual worth.

Christ's principle of renouncing or overcoming the world is misrepresented when it is said to be rooted either in denial of value to the present world, its life and work, or in ascetic adoption of the path of suffering for its own sake. The terms in which Christ formulates His principle, the call to all disciples to " take up the cross," connote neither the idealization of pain or sacrifice, nor the condemnation of this world as necessarily or inherently evil and worthless. What is demanded is rather the uncompromising spirit which protests against the evil of the world, and maintains its loyalty

to righteousness even in the face of death. It was not a belief in the nearness of eternity that made Christ ask such loyalty of His followers. The religious conscience would feel that the principle was equally binding if natural death were the only dissolution which was contemplated, and if the world as a whole were to go on its way unchanged. That may not of itself be proof that Jesus did not hold the views of future history which the eschatologists assert, but it at least proves that those views are not *demanded* for the explanation of His ethics. That is why, when the eschatological hope ceased to be a primary motive with the early Christians, "the religious and ethical instinct which it embodied" was, as Dr. Moffatt says, continued.[1]

The fact is, there is no part of the teaching of Jesus which has been less *distinctively* affected by eschatology than His ethics. Nor is the reason hard to seek. The true view-point in ethics is where we see the ultimate truths and issues of life. So far as any ethic is absolute, it abstracts from all accidental and temporary circumstances, and brings the individual face to face with the Eternal. What the ethic of Jesus owes to that perfect clearness with which He envisaged the eternal issues of

[1] J. Moffatt, *Theology of the Gospels*, p. 70.

life is therefore its absoluteness. Christ's ethics are not bound up with eschatology any more than any other system which, contemplating the finitude of mortal existence, brings and keeps our life continually before the Judgment-Throne of God.

This quite general influence of eschatology on Christ's ethics is abundantly recognized by writers on the subject. "What is the relation," asks Wernle, "between the eternal contents of the demand of Jesus and its eschatological foundation?" "The approach of eternity," he answers, "awakened in Jesus the recognition of all that is essential, of all that endures in the sight of God."[1] "Much of the unique moral grasp of the New Testament," says Mr. B. H. Streeter, "is in one way directly a result of the eschatological background of the period. For a whole generation the cloud of lesser interests rolled away, and ultimate values and eternal interests stood out before them stark and clear as never before or since in the history of our race."[2]

It remains, however, that when Christ *states* the motivation of His ethical precepts it is for the most part on grounds disconnected with even this general influence of eschatology

[1] Wernle, *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 94.

[2] B. H. Streeter, *Foundations*, p. 108.

on His mind. Take for example, the principle of loving enemies. We are to love our enemies, not because the time is short, but because the lovingkindness of our Father in Heaven endureth for ever. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, *that ye may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven*, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, etc." (Matt. v. 44, 45). No one reading this passage could possibly think that the nearness of the end had anything to do with it. Weiss, indeed, thinks that 1 Cor. xiii., like the Lord's command just considered, presupposes special conditions of life, and such a "special religious uplift" as was promised for the last days. But what really has the chapter to do with eschatology? Love is given the pre-eminence, is called "the superlative way," because it is the thing that matters in Christian character (verses 1-3), because it alone is equal to the strain of life (verses 4-7), and because it never faileth (verse 8). All through the stress is laid on the absolute and intrinsic worth of love. So with the whole Christian ethic. Its necessity is not related to any special period, but to its own matchless and abiding worth. The passages in which it is spoken of claim for

it this character. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Mark xiii.31). "And now *abideth* faith, hope, and charity "(1 Cor. xiii. 13).

The eschatologists are wrong, therefore, in their explanation of the Christian ethic. The moral law of Jesus cannot be regarded as merely preparatory to the Kingdom. Its relation to the Kingdom is much more central and binding, nor is it hard to find. In Matt. vi. 33, Jesus says "Seek ye first the Kingdom (of God) and His righteousness." He there envisages the true righteousness as something *flowing from the Kingdom*, a life issuing from the new stream of Divine redemptive forces liberated in the Kingdom. Here then we find the principle connecting Christ's ethics with His teaching about the Kingdom.

The ethic of Jesus is not Interim-Ethic, but the principle which, on the inner side, constitutes the Kingdom.

If the ethic of Jesus is high, if it cannot be woven together with the ways of the world, it is because it is the law of the Kingdom of God, and needs to be envisaged in that new context of grace, resource and power. Because it is the law of the Kingdom of God, it cannot simply be added like a piece of new cloth on to

[1] A. G. Hogg, *Christ's Message of the Kingdom*, pp. 126-135.

the old fabric of the world's life, or be poured like new wine into old bottles (Mark ii. 21, 22). It is in itself destructive of the old forms and fashions. It needs to create new institutions and moulds for itself. It exists, first and last, in a Divine context of redemptive and regenerative forces. If we take it out of that context or if we forget what that context means, we need not wonder if it seem impracticable.

On the other hand, because the Kingdom of God has already begun to exist in this world, the moral ideal of Jesus is intended for present actual application to human life, both individual and communal. It becomes a practical form of life because it comes to us in association with the power and grace of God. When the disciples, amazed at the seeming severity of one of Christ's ethical pronouncements, said, "Who then can be saved?" He answered, "*With men it is impossible, but not with God.* For with God all things are possible" (Mark x. 24). Accordingly we find the Apostles and the early Church continually envisaging the law of Christ in association with a new redemptive force which they consider to be at work in the world for their salvation, and of which they have personal experimental certainty. This force they call

the Holy Spirit—see especially the passage Romans viii. 1-17, where it appears variously as the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Life, or generally the Spirit. The new Christian life and ethic is regarded as the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). It manifests itself in all the inspired activities and functions of the Christian society (1 Cor. xii. 4-31). "All these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as he wills."

This is the right point of view from which to regard the various arguments against the practicability of the Christian ethic with which this chapter opened. The defect of the first objection, viz., that Christ's standard of ethical expectation is too high for human nature, is that it isolates human nature from the power of God, and ignores those conditions of grace under which in the Kingdom the Christian life is lived. Such arguments start always with man. *Christ on His side starts always with God.* The idea that humanity has not the strength to forgo the earthly bread for the sake of the heavenly has no support in Christ's thought of men. The qualities in association with which the Beatitudes present the Kingdom, viz., the contrite heart, the hunger and thirst after righteousness, the

longing for peace with God, are the qualities which, "seeing the multitudes," He judged to be deepest and most fundamental in human nature. Christ takes men on this side, and it is on these qualities that the redemptive genius of the Kingdom, the Holy Spirit, works (Luke iv. 17-19). From this point of view the argument that Christ's ethic is too high for human nature, takes too one-sided a view of human nature, while also failing to regard it sufficiently as the subject of Divine redemption.

So with regard to the other objection, that Christ's teaching too much overlooks the political and social conditions under which man's life is lived, and therefore provides no sufficient guidance for the duties and problems arising in these relations. Modern social and political thought starts with the State, and with the State's claims of power and right. Christ starts with God, His Kingdom, His claims. His teaching *necessarily* moves among the highest universals, and leaves out of sight the temporary, shifting conditions under which the life of man is socially organized. But Christ certainly recognized the claims of the State within their own proper limits (Mark xii. 17, also Matt. v. 41). A certain sympathy is always necessary with the State in its effort to moralize, however crudely, the

general life of the community and to carry the mass of men with it. But we cannot, for that reason, allow a distinction to be drawn in principle between State morality and the Christian ethic. The Christian law is the ideal towards which the life of the State must ever tend, the far off shining light to which its course must be shaped. Inasmuch, however, as the State is hampered by the peculiar conditions of its task, and the legislation which it provides is always of the nature of a compromise, a spiritual society must exist by the side of it which shall realize within itself that higher ideal of moral obligation which the State cannot enforce (Matt. v. 46-48, xx. 25-28, xxii. 21). We may say that from this point of view the specific Christian ethic begins where the ethic of the State leaves off.[1] But the outposts of the State ideal ought to be continually advancing. There is no *ultimate* line of demarcation between its morality and that of the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand no dynamic of social and political progress in the world is comparable to the Christian morality. It contains within itself the principle which abolishes all the evils under which the organized social life of mankind labours, oppression, war, injustice,

[1] Seeley, *Ecce Homo*, Preface, pp. xiv.-xviii.

poverty, all remediable suffering. By taking up the apocalyptic hope and presenting it as ultimately capable of complete fulfilment under conditions of spiritual renewal, Christ marks for the world the path along which all progress must be made. His ideal is nothing less than a redeemed humanity, a new creation, realizing under the social conditions of its existence all the blessedness which saints and prophets have associated with Heaven, and this ideal we must never forget.

CHAPTER V

THE MESSIANIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS. THE NECESSITY OF THE CROSS

It is integral to our inquiry to ask also what light is thrown on our subject by the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. We have already inquired to what extent His teaching concerning the Kingdom admits of being stated in terms of a purely eschatological doctrine of salvation. We have now to ask the parallel question to what extent the unique relation in which He stood to God and man can be expressed in terms of an eschatological Messiahship. Here we come upon the term "Son of Man," which is at once the characteristic self-designation of Jesus (Chap. III., p. 73, 80), and the point at which His Messianic consciousness connects most directly with the apocalyptic idealism of His times (Chap. II., p. 36f.). It is important to examine our Lord's use of the title, because to certain extremists of the eschatological school it has appeared that Jesus' passion to fulfil the *rôle* of apocalyptic Son of Man is the one key to His history and teaching. They have stated their

opinion in language which would leave us no option but to suppose that the unique personal claims of Jesus were a pretension or at best an adventure upon a theory. How misguided this is appears when we consider the deep religious roots of Jesus' claim, and the association of His Messianic destiny with His earthly life and His Cross.

That Jesus' choice of the title "Son of Man" goes back ultimately to the passage in Daniel where "one like unto a son of man" comes with the clouds of heaven and is given dominion and glory and a kingdom (Dan. vii. 13, 14) admits of no reasonable doubt. The older attempt to explain the title as meaning, in the first instance, "ideal" or "representative" man has been almost universally abandoned. It has been felt that such a philosophical interpretation is not only inadequate to the explanation of many of the most important passages, in which the title occurs in the Gospels, but is also for the time and place of Jesus historically improbable. On the other hand the passage in Daniel offers a satisfactory reason not only for Jesus' original adoption of the term in connection with His message of the Kingdom of God, but for the predicates with which He often invests it, above all, the Parousia-prediction (Mark xiii. 26; xiv. 62; Matt.

xix. 28 ; xxv. 31 ; Luke xvii. 24, etc.). But while it is unscientific to assume for the title a philosophical instead of a historical basis, it is equally unscientific to assume that Jesus in taking over the title would be bound by traditional usage, or would not import into it elements which had their origin in His own creative consciousness. We shall find that, while His adoption of the title shows the original contact of His teaching with the apocalyptic tradition, the connections into which He brings it, to speak of nothing else, carry it far beyond the limits of its original reference (*e.g.*, Mark viii. 31 ; ix. 12 ; Luke xix. 10, etc.). Briefly the distinguishing marks of the new usage are these :—

(1) By relating the title to the present, Jesus asserted that what was predicted concerning the Son of Man was already being fulfilled in Himself.

(2) By associating the Son of Man with another conception, not hitherto regarded as Messianic, viz., the "Servant of Jehovah" conception in Deutero-Isaiah, Jesus taught that the Messiah could fulfil His destiny, and the Kingdom come, only by the Cross.

Before passing on to consider Jesus' use of the title in detail, it is necessary to make one or two preliminary observations.

Messianic Consciousness of Jesus

1. That Jesus claimed to be the Messiah admits on critical grounds of no reasonable doubt. It is the one fact which makes His public ministry, and His rejection by the Jewish people (Mark xiv. 61-64), intelligible. With the exception, therefore, of a few extremists who claim plenary rights to excise whole passages from our existing documents, in order to bring the Gospels into harmony with their own preconceived ideas of what Jesus meant and did,[1] all critics are agreed that the New Testament confession of Jesus as the Christ goes back to an origin in His own teaching.[2] Even those whose object is to reduce His personal claims within the narrowest possible compass, find in the Messianic claim an incontestable fact which cannot be put aside. Yet neither historically nor logically can Jesus' Messiahship be regarded as the earliest form in which His consciousness of a unique relation to God expressed itself. It was preceded by something else, which forms the substratum of His consciousness, and of which the Messianic claim is only a particular historical expression. We must go back here to what was said earlier (Chap. III. p. 78) regarding Jesus' sense

[1] *e.g.*, Wrede and Wellhausen.

[2] On this point see, above all, H. J. Holtzmann, *Das Messianische Bewusstsein Jesu* (1907).

of a perfect filial relation to God, the consciousness which comes to the surface in the saying, "No one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son chooses to make the revelation" (Matt. xi. 27=Luke x. 22). We find here a claim which is immensely greater and deeper than any which a mere official designation would of itself import. And while it is not *à priori* inconceivable that Jesus, starting from the purely Messianic consciousness, advanced to this wider and more universal conception of His relation to God, the evidence which our Gospels afford is all the other way. We are justified, therefore, in regarding as the psychological *prius* of His Messianic claim the consciousness of a relation to God, which He could only describe by saying that God was His Father, and He God's Son.

2. The Gospel tradition connects Jesus' Messianic consciousness with His baptism (Chap. III. p. 72f.). The voice heard at the baptism, "This is my beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased" (Mark i. 11; Matt. iii. 17), signifies that to Jesus' mind the certainty of being God's promised Messiah now became fully articulate. Some of our authorities for the Lucan account of the baptism supply a

reading which, if it represented the authentic evangelical tradition, would enable us to go further and regard the baptism as very definitely the birth-hour of Jesus' Messianic consciousness. According to Codex D and a few related authorities, the voice which Jesus heard, Luke iii. 22, was "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee." But this reading is easily explained as a full quotation of Psalm ii. 7, and cannot be preferred to the tradition of the other Synoptists. All that our Gospels warrant us in saying, therefore, is that in His baptism Jesus attained the final certainty of His Messianic vocation. He came to His baptism already conscious of a unique relation to God, on which the Messianic idea was now superinduced.

3. The voice heard at the baptism combines a reference to Psalm ii. 7 with a reference to Isaiah xlii. 1, xliv. 2, and it is inferred accordingly that Jesus' Messianic consciousness included from the start elements going back to the Isaianic "Servant of Jehovah." Whether so much as this is implied in the actual words reported as having been heard at the baptism may indeed be regarded as doubtful. We know that collections of Messianic proof-texts were current in antiquity, and arose out of the desire to organize and combine the Old Testa-

ment Messianic material. It is possible that the form of words which our Gospels represent as having been heard by Jesus rests on such a familiar combination, and in that case it would be unnecessary to assume that the Servant-conception was specially present to His mind. On the other hand, it is possible that Jesus' reason for presenting Himself for baptism had something to do with thoughts in His own mind regarding the Servant who was "numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah liii. 12). Jesus consented to be baptized as the first act in that identification of Himself with the sinful which He saw prefigured in the Isaianic Servant. In that case we shall understand the baptismal voice as implying that what had been hitherto only a surmise now acquired the certainty of a Divine revelation. But whatever may have been the precise significance of the words which Jesus heard, there is no doubting the fact that from a very early time Jesus' thought of His vocation shaped itself along the lines laid down in Isaiah liii. It is this identification of Himself with the Servant of the Lord that underlies the announcement which, according to Luke, was made at Nazareth (Luke iv. 16-22), and which Luke prefixes to the Galilean ministry on account of its programmatic character and value. The reference there,

indeed, is not to the Servant-passages proper, but to Isaiah lxi. 1-2, lviii. 6, but Jesus would naturally group all these passages together as equally pointing forward to the Messianic era of the Spirit. The same identification underlies Jesus' teaching with regard to the atoning value of His death. Detail after detail in these allusions finds explanation when the Isaianic Servant is kept before our minds. We are justified therefore in regarding the Servant-idea as regulative of Jesus' Messianic consciousness from the start.

4. It is natural to ask whether the same can be said for the other main strand in our Lord's Messianic consciousness, the line of thought which connects with Dan. vii. 13, and emerges in the title "Son of Man." The view has obtained a wide currency in modern times that the proper *locus* of the "Son of Man" references is in the period subsequent to Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi, when according to the Marcan narrative, Jesus "began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, etc." (Mark viii. 31). Whether we are to accept this date as the *terminus a quo* of Jesus' use of the title Son of Man must be regarded as at least open to question. The majority of references to the "Son of Man" belong to the later period. In the Marcan narrative only two

(Mark ii. 10, 28) occur previously to Peter's confession. Yet our final judgment on this matter awaits decision of the larger question of the greater or less closeness of Jesus' contact with the apocalyptic thought of His times. We know from Enoch (xlvi. 1f., xxxviii. 2; xxxix. 6, etc.), and 4 Ezra 13, etc., the great interest which had been excited in apocalyptic circles, before and after Jesus' day, by the Danielic reference to the "one like unto a son of man" who should receive a Kingdom from the Most High. While it is true that in these books the term "Son of Man" has not yet become a *title* of the Messiah, there is no disputing its Messianic reference. It is arguable that Jesus' adoption of the term is explicable only on the supposition of His acquaintance with the apocalyptic reasonings of His time, and that the identification of Himself with the Son of Man was implicit in His earliest thoughts of His vocation. Its presence to His mind, however, cannot be proved from the records of the baptism and the temptation in the wilderness. In His baptism Jesus became finally certain of being the Christ, and in the temptation He definitely set aside all political and unspiritual conceptions of His office. We know that at a later time He explicitly rejected the title "Son of David" as inadequate to His

conception of the Messianic office (Mark xii. 35-37), and there is no doubt that the title which He substituted was the Son of Man. But there is no evidence when and where the first adoption of the title occurred.

We may now pass on to consider Jesus' use of the title " Son of Man " in detail. The title occurs in every stratum of the evangelical tradition, being found in Mark, in Q, in the special sources of Matthew and Luke, and in the Fourth Gospel. It represents therefore so integral a part of the original tradition that, as Dr. Denney has said, " No one could give any account of how Jesus spoke without making use of it."[1] In spite of this fact our right to regard the word as a Messianic self-designation of Jesus has been seriously called in question on linguistic grounds. It is argued that in Aramaic there is no equivalent which could possibly stand the weight of meaning which our Greek Gospels attach to the expression on Jesus' lips, and therefore that Jesus Himself did not use the title in the way our Gospels represent. We have in this assumption one of the strongest bulwarks of the theory of a non-apocalyptic Gospel (Chap. II., p. 62f.)

We must leave to the Appendix of the present chapter the detailed investigation of

[1] Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 286.

the linguistic questions involved in this contention. It will there be seen that, when allowance is made for the celebrity attained by the "Son of Man" conception in apocalyptic thought and literature, the argument that Jesus, though speaking the Aramaic language, could not give His speech a perfectly clear relation to that conception can no longer be substantiated. For the present we may assume the results of that discussion, and regard the evidence of our Greek Gospels as in authentic correspondence with Jesus' own speech. We find then that the "Son of Man" sayings in the Gospels fall into three classes, which for the sake of clearness we shall keep apart.

(1) We have those sayings of which the final confession before the High Priest (Mark xiv. 62, Matt. xxvi. 64, Luke xxii. 69) may be taken as the type. Jesus is asked by the High Priest, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" and answers:

> Mark xiv. 62. "I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

We may compare the following passages:

> Matt. xix: 28. "In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones."
>
> Matt. xxv. 31. "The Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him."

Luke xvii. 24. "As the lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth unto the other part under the heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in His day."

These sayings, none of which is taken from the "Little Apocalypse" (Mark xiii. 5-37, Matt. xxiv. 4-36, Luke xxi. 8-36), and also the saying in Matt. x. 23[1] belong entirely to the later period of Jesus' life, the period subsequent to Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi, when He definitely set His face to go to Jerusalem, and have the great interest of showing us the ultimate significance for Jesus' mind of His identification of Himself with the figure in Daniel's vision. As the confession before the High Priest constitutes our final warrant for believing that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, and as such identified Himself with the Danielic Son of Man, it is natural to look in the same quarter for the ultimate predicates with which He invested His claim. These are found in the Parousia-prediction, the prediction that He, who was now rejected and condemned by the Jewish people, would return, swiftly as the lightning, on a universal scale, within the lifetime of that generation, to exercise the functions assigned by prophecy to the Son of

[1] Late, because proximate elements in the context, *e.g.*, Matt. x. 22, have parallels in the later discourse in ch. xxiv., *e.g.* xxiv. 9, and may have been brought forward by the evangelist into an earlier period than that in which they were first spoken. Matt. x. 23 therefore may have belonged originally to one of the later discourses of Jesus.

Man. Jesus said to the High Priest and his court, "Ye shall see," which leaves no doubt that He expected His Divine vindication to take place before the existing generation had passed away. Here then we have the final values of Jesus' identification of Himself with the Man of apocalyptic expectation. In Daniel vii. 13 He found language in which to express the certainty of His Divine triumph. His mind, which was influenced by this passage from an earlier date centred more and more closely round it as the Cross came into sight. And now, if these were the only passages in which He spoke of Himself as the Son of Man, it might be possible to define His Messiahship as purely eschatological in character. But there are other sayings :

(2) We have a considerable number of sayings expressive of the conditions under which, or the activities in which, Jesus manifests Himself as Son of Man on earth.

Mark ii. 10. "The Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins."

Mark ii. 28. "The Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

Matt. xi. 19. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking." Luke vii. 34.

Matt. viii. 20. "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Luke ix. 58.

Luke xix. 19. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

If this class of sayings belongs to the original Gospel tradition, we shall understand them to mean that the eschatological hope is already being fulfilled, inasmuch as Jesus is already Son of Man under conditions of His earthly life. The right to regard them as authentic, however, has been called in question by a criticism which, founding on the Marcan Gospel, denies that Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah previously to Peter's confession (Mark viii. 29-31). The two instances in which the term occurs in Mark before that time (Mark ii. 10, 28) are put down to a misunderstanding on the part of the Evangelist, while the other instances, peculiar to Matthew and Luke, are explained by the habit which had arisen of writing " Son of Man " in utterances of Jesus instead of the first personal pronoun. According to this criticism what Mark should have written in ii. 10 and ii. 28 was simply ". Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins " and " Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

But it may well be asked if this is not to re-write our Gospels to suit the demands of a preconceived theory. The first duty of criticism is to do all possible justice to our existing documents. If it be granted that Jesus might see His destiny prefigured, from an early time in His ministry, in the Danielic " Son of Man," there is

no reason to deny that on occasion He may have spoken of Himself as such, without thereby publicly revealing His secret. It is impossible to think that Jesus said that "Man as such has power on earth to forgive sins," or that "Man is lord even of the Sabbath." He was certainly on the latter occasion advocating the rights of humanity against a formalism which denied the essential humanity of religion, but He spoke not as a man merely, but as One who had the right to say what the claims of humanity were. In the other passage in Mark, the authority to forgive sins is expressly equated with the power to say "Arise and walk," which does not belong to humanity as such. It should be remembered that Jesus was here challenged to give a reason for the authority with which He spoke and acted, and He would naturally answer by referring to His supreme Messianic office, even though it was not yet His intention to reveal Himself publicly.[1] As regards the other passages, those peculiar to Matthew and Luke, if we admit that Jesus *could* say such things about Himself, we cannot but feel that they would lose inexpressibly by the substitution of "I" for the "Son of Man." Certainly the Evangelists sometimes substitute the one form for the other, thus—

[1] Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*, pp. 286-303.

Luke xxi. 8. "Him will the Son of Man confess."	=	Matt. x. 32. "Him will I confess."
Luke vi. 32. "For the Son of Man's sake."	=	Matt. v. 11. "For My sake."

It does not matter for the present purpose which form may have been given in Q. All that we need notice is that on occasion the one form could be inserted for the other. But when all allowance is made for this habit, it does not amount to an explanation of sayings like Matt. viii. 20, xi. 19, xii. 32, for the very point of these utterances is in the contrast which is implied between the predicted glory of the Son of Man and the conditions under which Jesus' work was being done on earth. There is a peculiar pregnancy about this class of saying, which is only brought out by equating them as follows. Just as in the Parables of the Kingdom Jesus says :

The Kingdom which is to be revealed in the latter days, and which many kings and righteous men have desired to see	=	The Kingdom which is manifest in My work, and which is now like a seed cast into the ground,

so in these sayings about the Son of Man the following equation is implicit :

The Son of Man who is to come on the clouds of heaven, and to receive dominion, and glory, and a kingdom (Dan. vii. 13)	=	He who now enters into the social life of man (Matt. xi. 19), is homeless (Matt. viii. 20), is spoken against (Matt. xii. 32), and goes out to seek and save those who are lost (Luke xix. 10).

By this interpretation we both save these sayings, and are enabled to complete the full parallelism between Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom, and His teaching with regard to His Messiahship. In both cases He gives the supreme objects of apocalyptic expectation a present reference, and therefore a new character. In both cases He asserts that the eschatological hope is already fulfilled, at least in part.

This is the proper point at which to refer to one peculiar feature of our Lord's use of the title Son of Man. "Son of Man" in all the recorded utterances is always subject and never predicate, and this suggests that *the original reference and meaning of the term are already fixed.* What the sayings of the class we have been considering give us is not a series of analytical judgments, developing the content of the Son of Man idea, but rather synthetic judgments, expressive of the historical conditions under which Jesus exercises His Messiahship on earth. The contention has been made that Jesus by His objective use of the title disclaims all identity with the glorious figure of Daniel's vision.[1] But this not only flies in the face of the most characteristic of Jesus' sayings about the Son of Man, but puts

[1] Weiss, *Predigt Jesu*, pp. 174-175.

a gratuitous interpretation upon the objectivity of His teaching in this connection. Jesus used the term objectively for the good reason that He was conscious of teaching new truths regarding it, giving it a paradoxical reference, inserting it in a strange context—that, namely, of His own life and destiny, which He knew, nevertheless, to be those of the Son of Man.

(3) We come now to the third and last class of sayings regarding the Son of Man, the series which predicts the sufferings and death of the Son of Man, and His rising from the dead.

Mark viii. 31. "And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and after three days rise again." Also Mark ix. 12, 31; x. 33.

Mark x. 45. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark xiv. 41. "The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

We are not concerned here with the exact verbal form of some of these predictions, which to a certain extent may have been moulded by the force of subsequent events. What is of interest for us is the new synthetic relation into which they bring the Son of Man. Jesus here expressly identifies Himself as Son of Man with the Suffering Servant of God in Isaiah lii.

13—liii. 12, and with this identification the two strands of His Messianic consciousness unite, and the Parousia appears as the other side, so to speak, of the suffering on the Cross. Here, then, we have the culminating proof that Jesus carries the conception of the Son of Man beyond the limits of its originally eschatological reference, and makes it impossible to express His teaching regarding Himself within the limits of an eschatological Messiahship.

But something still more important follows from this identification :

Jesus says that the Cross is the condition of His fulfilment of His Messianic destiny, and therefore it is by the Cross that the Kingdom of God comes with power.

This is a principle of cardinal importance. It was observed in an earlier chapter that Jesus, in proclaiming the nearness of the Kingdom of Heaven, was reserving the thought of whatever mediatorial work it devolved upon Himself to do. We now come to the content of that thought. Jesus says very definitely that it is only through the Cross that His own Messianic work is fulfilled, and that the Kingdom comes with power.

It is important to grasp what Jesus means in this connection by the *necessity* of His death. According to Mark, Jesus " began to teach

them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, etc." (viii. 31). Certainly there is nothing in the original associations of the term Son of Man to explain this necessity. The antithesis between the predicted glory of the Son of Man and the actual circumstances of Jesus' life on earth here reaches its climax, and Jesus' thought has moved to its extremest distance from the standpoint of pure apocalyptic thought. Schweitzer, indeed, in order to save these sayings for his eschatological theory, attempts to explain the necessity of Jesus' suffering and death by reference to the apocalyptic dogma of the πειρασμός or tribulation, which must precede the final coming of the Kingdom. According to him, Jesus at first expected the Kingdom to come during His own life, and it was under the influence of this conviction that He sent out His followers to preach in the cities of Israel, and to say, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." But as time went on, and the expected did not take place, it became clear to Him that something was still wanting. "The movement of repentance had not been sufficient." The sufferings, which must precede the coming of the Kingdom, were not yet complete. Even then, according to Schweitzer, it was not clear to Jesus that He alone must pay the

necessary price (Mark x. 38-39). He thought that the three who accompanied Him to Gethsemane were destined to share His fate. He bade them pray that they might not come εἰς πειρασμόν (Mark xiv. 38). Finally, the cloud gathered round His head alone. According to this view, therefore, the necessity of Jesus' death comes under the apocalyptic category of πειρασμός, the tribulation or woes through which the Kingdom comes.[1]

In reply to this theory, we need only say that there is no evidence of any kind in our documents to support it. The category under which Jesus brings the necessity of His death is not apocalyptic. He speaks of His life being given as a "ransom" (Mark x. 45), and of His blood as "My blood of the Covenant" (Mark xiv. 24). His thought moves in a region which is not only independent of, but at extreme variance with, apocalyptic dogma. When He said, "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him" (Mark xiv. 21), or "as hath been determined" (Luke xxii. 22), He was thinking of Isaiah liii., and what was there predicted of the Servant of Jehovah. This becomes clear when we examine a word like Mark x. 45. The word λύτρον, indeed, does not occur in Isaiah liii. But there are enough points of contact

[1] Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, pp. 384-390.

with that chapter to remove all real doubt that Jesus had it in mind. Thus :

1. The category under which Jesus brings His self-sacrifice, to " minister " (διακονῆσαι), recalls the Isaianic " Servant " (Isaiah liii. 11).

2. " To give His life " corresponds to " He surrendered His life unto death " (Isaiah liii. 12).

3. The difficult expression " for many " (Mark x. 45, xiv. 24) finds its counterpart in " My righteous servant shall justify many," and " He bore the sin of many " (Isaiah liii. 11, 12).

These remarkable agreements leave no doubt whatsoever that Jesus was thinking of His death as vicarious suffering for sin.

We are not further concerned here with the question by what process of thought our Lord arrived at the redemptive meaning of His death on the Cross. It is sufficient to notice that, in His own mind, it was a sacrificial act, was interpreted as " an offering for sin." His mind was moving at this point in an altogether different region from Dan. vii. 13. If He fulfilled the apocalyptic idea in Israel, He no less fulfilled the sacrificial and priestly idea. In Him the two lines of thought, hitherto for the most part held apart, converge and are united.

We conclude, therefore, that Jesus in His teaching with regard to Himself implies the same fulfilment of apocalyptic ideas as in His teaching regarding the Kingdom. The key to His Gospel is not the pure apocalyptic dogma of His times, but His own unique religious consciousness. He saw the meaning of Israel's religious ideals, and He turned them into present fact and teaching. The centre of interest is not a spectacular world of visions and dreams, but a personal life and consciousness in which the idea of God's perfect sovereignty had come to perfect fulfilment. Most instructive of all, from the standpoint of our original inquiry, is Jesus' emphasis of the Cross as the way to the Kingdom. We saw before that Jesus brought the Kingdom of God, at least in part, into line with present processes and experiences in human life, but made its coming dependent on faith. We have seen in this chapter that He brings the Messianic hope of Israel into line with the present events and conditions of His own life, but makes its fulfilment dependent on the Cross. These two things, Faith and the Cross, are the pivots on which Jesus' Gospel of the Kingdom turns. They supply the answer to the question with which we started, How did Jesus say the Kingdom of God would come ?

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

THE LINGUISTIC DIFFICULTY INVOLVED IN JESUS' USE OF THE TITLE "SON OF MAN"

We have seen that objection has been taken to the genuineness of the "Son of Man" sayings on the ground that there is no Aramaic equivalent which could bear the weight of the predicates assigned to the title in our Greek Gospels.

The literal equivalent of "Son of Man" in Aramaic is *bar-nash* or *bar-nasha*, which means simply "man," an individual member of the human species. This also is the *only* expression in Aramaic for "man." According to Lietzmann, the Aramaic term is much too slight and trivial an expression ever to have sustained such predicates as are attached to its literal equivalent ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in our Greek Gospels. In consequence, in any passage in our Gospels where ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου has an indefeasibly Messianic reference (and that is the vast majority of cases), "we must suppose that that saying cannot have come from the lips of Jesus in the form represented in

the text." What we have are either mistranslations of the original sayings in Aramaic, or new sayings freely created on the model of such mistranslations. Jesus never applied to Himself the Messianic title "Son of Man," because it did not, and for linguistic reasons could not, exist in Aramaic.[1] Lietzmann finds corroboration in the fact that the title is not known to the Pauline or post-Pauline literature, nor to any of the Apostolic Fathers except Ignatius (ad Ephes. xx. 2). A similar argument is used by Wellhausen. He grants that the books of Enoch and 4 Ezra prove that the Danielic phrase *One like unto a son of man* was interpreted in Jesus' time as a reference to the Messiah, but he thinks it by no means follows that *bar-nasha*, "man," "son of man," would without qualification be understood as a designation of the Messiah. The term could acquire this special reference only by being brought into express connection with the passage in Daniel, which throws the light on it. On the other hand, in the Gospels the term is often used absolutely, without anything in the context to prepare the way for it, or to make it clear that it is the "man" in Daniel's vision that is meant. There are instances, indeed, where the predicates assigned to it leave no

[1] H. Lietzmann, *Der Menschensohn*, p. 85.

doubt that it has this reference, but they are a minority. For the most part the term appears without a context which would make it intelligible to Jewish hearers.[1] Wellhausen, therefore, denies that the Son of Man sayings belong to the original tradition of Jesus. Like the rest of the eschatology they came in later, when research in the Old Testament led to Dan. vii. 13 being fixed on as a prefigurement of Messiah-Jesus.

It will be felt that these arguments have the fairness to keep our minds on the real difficulty. The real difficulty is to understand how a term which in Aramaic denotes simply one man among others can have served to call up the central figure in Daniel's vision, without anything in the context putting the reference beyond question.

By way of answer to these arguments, it has to be said, first of all, that if the usage of our Gospels is based on a mistake, the mistake has infected all our existing sources. Either we know nothing of the historical Jesus, or we know that He used the title Son of Man, and used it in a way that placed its reference to Himself beyond doubt. Moreover, it cannot be pleaded on behalf of the supposed mistranslation that it was one which could easily

[1] Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, 2nd edit., p. 127.

arise. The expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is in Greek too difficult to arise accidentally, or to propagate itself in the manner supposed by the Aramaists. Nothing but a necessity in the tradition can have compelled the minting of the new expression. In the Old Testament passages, where the Hebrew expression *ben-adham* occurs, the LXX. generally renders by υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (Psalm viii. 5; lxxx. 18; Isaiah li. 12; Jer. xlix. 18; l. 40, etc.), or by ἄνθρωπος (Isa. lvi. 2). These is no instance in the LXX. of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Moreover we have to explain why our Evangelists should in consecutive lines or verses render *bar-nasha* now by "man" simply, and now by "Son of Man"—compare Mark ii. 28, where both translations occur. If they did not simply *coin* all the Son of Man sayings (which in view of Mark xiv. 62 and similar passages cannot for a moment be admitted) but followed a tradition, and if the tradition which they followed contained even one genuine instance of *bar-nasha* with a Messianic significance, then their ability to distinguish its significance there proves that *bar-nasha* could be used by Jesus also with an indefeasibly Messianic import, which the predicates attached or something in His voice or gestures would clearly bring out. Finally, Wellhausen's argument that *bar-nasha*,

in the Messianic sense, could not be used in the absolute way in which ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is employed in our Greek Gospels, only proves that our Greek Gospels are not *translations* of existing Aramaic documents. Our Evangelists, writing Greek, could use the term "Son of Man" without the qualifications which in Jesus' use of the term, or in the Aramaic transcripts of the first reporters, were necessary to show that here or here not man simply was meant, but the Man prefigured in Daniel's vision.

If we knew to what extent apocalyptic ideas were current in the popular mind in our Lord's time, we might find that *bar-nasha*, as an allusion to the *bar-nasha* of Daniel's vision, would not create difficulty or misunderstanding among the hearers, but would drop like seed into a prepared soil. The passage in Daniel had long given a set to Jewish Messianic imagination, and it is possible that popular acquaintance with the term *bar-nasha* in the Messianic sense was even greater than we should infer from the apocalyptic literature. As to the interest which the figure in Daniel's vision had excited in the circles from which the apocalyptic literature proceeded, we are left in no manner of doubt. It will be of service to set down together some of the main references.

Dan. vii. 13-14. "I saw in the night visions, and behold there came with the clouds of heaven *one like unto a son of man*, and he came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before Him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Dan. vii. 27. "And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High : His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

Enoch xlvi. 1-2. "And there I saw One who had a head of days, and His head was white like wool, and with Him was another being whose countenance had *the appearance of a man*, and his face was full of graciousness, like one of the holy angels. And I asked the angel who went with me, and showed me all the hidden things, concerning *that son of man*, who he was, whence he was, and why he went with the head of days."

Enoch xlvi. 3. "And he answered and said unto me, This is the son of man who hath righteousness, with whom dwelleth righteousness, etc."

Enoch lxix. 26-27. "The name of *that son of man* had been revealed unto them. And he sat on the throne of his glory, and the sum of judgment was given unto the son of man."

Enoch lxix. 29. "*That son of man* has appeared, and has seated himself on the throne of his glory, and all evil shall pass away before his face, and the word of that son of man shall go forth, etc."

4 Ezra xiii. 3. "Ventus ascendere fecit de corde maris *quasi similitudinem hominis*, et convolabat *ille homo* cum nubibus coeli."

A comparison of these passages justifies the following conclusions :

(1) The original expression in Dan. vii. 13, " one like unto a son of man," refers not to the Messiah, of whom Daniel does not speak, but, as vii. 27 proves, to " the people of the saints of the Most High," and is simply an imaginative symbolization of the humanity of the Kingdom of God as contrasted with the world-empires of the past whose brutal characteristics are typified by the various beasts in the preceding verses.

(2) By the time the Book of Enoch comes to be written—Professor Charles dates the Similitudes between 94 and 79 B.C.—the " one like unto a son of man " in Dan. vii. 13 is interpreted as the Messiah, who was to bring in the final victory of the Kingdom, and to judge the world as God's vicegerent. The writer of Daniel had left it to his successors to fit the Messiah into the new apocalyptic eschatology which starts with him, and the appropriate *locus* was found in the saying about the one like unto a son of man, to whom was given dominion and glory and a kingdom. By the time the Similitudes of Enoch were written, the identification of the Messiah with this mysterious figure was complete.

(3) " Son of Man " has not yet become a

title of the Messiah, though its reference to Him is undisputed. Enoch and 4 Ezra, like the Johannine Apocalypse (cp. i. 13; xiv. 14), keep up in various ways the original Danielic expression, which represents the bearer of God's kingdom not as Son of Man or Man, but as *like* a son of man or man. This is due, no doubt to a scrupulous regard for the original Scriptural expression, but we may agree with Baldensperger that apocalyptic dogma might already have settled what apocalyptic language still left indefinite. Charles thinks that "Son of Man" is already in Enoch a title of the Messiah. He thinks that the Ethiopic demonstratives in the phrases "*this* Son of Man," "*that* Son of Man," simply reproduce the Greek article in the original.[1] But whether the term be a title or not, there is no question as to its reference.

(4) It is probable that these literary occurrences rest on a much wider acquaintance with the Son of Man idea than we might suppose from their number or their inclusion in a somewhat cryptic and esoteric literature. Jesus in adopting this title above all others as the description of His own office and destiny did not thereby, we may be sure, place Himself beyond the understanding of the common

[1] Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (1912), p. 86f.

people. There already existed in the popular mind an imaginative interest in what was predicted concerning the Son of Man, and even though the word " son of man " meant no more than " man " in the language which Jesus spoke, yet the predicates attached to it, the claims made in connection with it, would make it quite clear that it was the " Man " of Daniel's vision that was meant. Whether the Lord was acquainted with the Book of Enoch, as Charles thinks, or not, the ideas which it elaborates were, so to speak, in the air. Jesus, therefore, could speak of " the Man," and be understood by what He said of Him to mean the Messiah. This is in substance Fiebig's answer to Lietzmann. We conclude, therefore, that the linguistic objection of the Aramaists to Jesus' use of the title " Son of Man " is not conclusive. It is much easier to suppose that there was enough popular acquaintance with apocalyptic Christology to make Jesus' use of the term unambiguous, than to suppose that the usage of the term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in all our Greek sources rests on a misunderstanding. As for Lietzmann's supplementary argument, the absence of the title from the Pauline and post-Pauline literature, there were excellent reasons for this. Partly it is due to the misunderstanding which the term would inevitably

create in Gentile minds unacquainted with Jewish tradition, and partly it is due to the fact that Jesus had given into the hands of His followers an even higher, and for Gentile readers less ambiguous, category, under which to bring His teaching concerning Himself. As we have seen, His Messianic consciousness had for its substratum the sense of a unique Divine Sonship of which the Messiahship was only the temporary historical embodiment. When the earthly life is over, the Messianic categories fall into the background, or are merged in the greater and more universal relation to God which is expressed by the term "Son of God." This is the point, perhaps, of the Matthæan version of the question which resulted in Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi :

Matt. xvi. 13.—*Jesus.* "Who do men say that the Son of Man is ?"

Matt. xvi. 15.—*Jesus.* "But who do you say that I am ?"

Matt. xvi. 16.—*Peter.* "Thou art the Christ, and Son of the living God."

CHAPTER VI

ESCHATOLOGY AND THE PAROUSIA PREDICTION

Jesus represents the Kingdom of God as a matter no longer of purely future interest and expectation, but of present experience. He speaks of His Messianic work in terms which imply that a new start has been made in human history, and an era of fulfilment begun. The powers of the world to come are already operative for the overthrow of Satan. God's Idea for humanity is planted like a seed in the world's life. The Divine spring has begun, and with it comes the assurance that the harvest will not long be delayed.

In this consciousness of something absolutely new having come into the world by Him consists our right to say that Jesus fulfilled the apocalyptic hope of Israel. For if eschatology means anything, it means that salvation comes about, not by any mere historical processes, but by an interposition of the Divine, coming from on high. Jesus was conscious of such an interposition being made in Himself, though in very different forms from those which the thought of those times expected, and to the new era introduced by Himself in the

relations of God and men He applied very definitely the predicates of the Messianic age. When He spoke of Himself as the Bridegroom keeping the feast with His companions (Mark ii. 19; Matt. xi. 19, etc.), or as—metaphorically—sending a sword on earth (Matt. x. 24), or as realizing what many prophets and righteous men had desired to see (Matt. xiii. 17), He implied that what was traditionally regarded as to come in the last days was already *mutatis mutandis* being realized through Him. His own Messianic work, and the results it was producing, were not merely premonitory of the final era of salvation, they represented its beginning. Yet it was only the beginning. Jesus' victory was not complete. He read in the Old Testament of more glorious results than were yet achieved. As the forces of opposition gathered round Him, and the Cross came into sight, His mind began to centre more and more in the future, towards which Isaiah liii and Daniel vii shaped His thoughts. Eschatology, which all along had given a certain form to His message, now narrowed down into an intense symbol of His victory. He spoke of the death which He must die before the Kingdom of God should have come with power, but beyond the Cross He saw Himself coming on the clouds of heaven, with great power and

glory. The terms in which He spoke of the Kingdom become more and more apocalyptic in character.

This intensification of the apocalyptic element is not, however, out of relation to the evidence which Jesus had borne to the Kingdom as a present reality. The mist-wreaths still linger on the hills even after they have lifted from the plains. As Jesus went forward to the Cross it was with a deepening sense of the still unrealized results of His work. At times He had spoken of the Kingdom of God in terms which did not go beyond the facts and experience of the present. But there are things beyond the bounds of present experience which cannot be expressed except in the language of symbol, and we find, accordingly, that apocalyptic eschatology continued to give Jesus, even after He had related its central conception to present reality, the language in which alone He could express the future of the Kingdom. We shall not be surprised at this when we remember that to Him too, under the conditions of His human life, the future was the ineffable, whose issues He could only express in figurative symbols.[1] We shall not forget, however, that *having once brought down*

[1] So, to take lesser analogies, Amos described the day of the Lord in the conventional terms of an earlier day, and Plato borrowed the Orphic eschatology.

the apocalyptic hope to earth, and given it a present fulfilment in spiritual experience, Jesus indicates the way in which we are to interpret the secrets of His eschatology. Following His own principles we shall not go wrong if we regard the realities to which it points as spiritual.

We add, therefore, to the principles laid down in Chapters III., IV., and V., the following:

While apocalyptic elements remain, and centre round the final glories of the Kingdom, they are not out of relation to the fact that the Kingdom is already come in the spiritual experience of the Christian era. The spiritual interpretation of the Kingdom is not abandoned, but left to the experience and wisdom of the Church to complete.

We may notice in passing the modifications which Jesus made on the content of the final hope, even in those connections in which the use of the traditional language is most apparent. The picture which Jesus gives of the after-glories of the Kingdom is very different from that which we find in Jewish sources. For one thing, there are none of the familiar eudæmonistic descriptions of blessedness in which Jewish imagination revelled. Jesus never depicts the life of the coming era for its own sake. We hear nothing of pearly gates, or golden streets, or any of the ten thousand marvels with which the riot of Jewish antici-

pation filled the picture of the Golden Age.[1] It is only necessary to read a delineation like that in the Apocalypse of Baruch to see how completely Jesus has divested the vision of the future of all material, sensuous features.[2] Wherever Jesus speaks directly about the Resurrection, it is to discourage all paradisical associations. "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God."

Jesus indeed for didactic purposes employs at times the pictorial ideas of the life of the coming world to which apocalyptic had given currency, as, for example, in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, where He speaks of Lazarus being carried by the angels "into Abraham's bosom" (Luke xvi. 22), but in these cases it is only the simplest outlines of the picture which are retained. The moral of the parable is painted against an accustomed background in which His hearers would detect no single trait or feature that was new, or that would draw attention to itself. Jesus is content to hold before men the moral issues of life, and it is these that receive all the emphasis in His teaching. Heaven follows from communion with God here. God is not the God of the dead but the God of the living; for all

[1] Cp. Wetstein on Revelations xxii 2. [2] *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xxix. 4f.

live unto Him (Luke xx. 35-38). Apart from this certainty, and the corresponding truth with regard to retribution, we have little that takes us beyond the familiar eschatology of the times.

It is certainly very difficult to relate the Kingdom, as a perfected state of human life in this world, to the condition of existence into which those pass whose death takes place before the great consummation. Jesus in His teaching seems to combine two ideas, which Jewish apocalyptic also combined—"the idea of a corporate national regeneration on this earth, and the idea of individual immortality in a supersensuous sphere."[1] But there is in His recorded utterances no systematic co-ordination of the two issues. On the one hand, He speaks of the perfected Kingdom as a glorified state of existence here. "There are some here . . . which shall in no wise taste death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix. 1, etc.). The Kingdom as the enthronement of God in this world's life filled the mind of Jesus, and was the aim and object to which from the start His whole work and teaching were directed. On the other hand, He speaks of death intervening, and the individual soul passing beyond the earthly sphere, as in the parable of the Rich

[1] B. H. Streeter in *Foundations*, p. 115.

Man and Lazarus, or in the words to the thief on the Cross (Luke xxiii. 43). It is best, perhaps, to say that Jesus contemplated both eventualities, and found their ultimate adjustment, as the eschatology of the day found it, in the doctrine of resurrection. According to the book of Daniel the blessed dead would rise to share with the living the felicity of the Kingdom (Dan. xii. 2), and this is the view of St. Paul also and the early Christians (1 Thess. iv. 13-18). But the fact that Jesus nowhere co-ordinates the two issues shows it was no part of His purpose to describe the future in exact or literal terms. Rather is His language the adoption for didactic purposes of a current imagery and symbolism. On the other hand, the sayings which are really constitutive of Jesus' thoughts of blessedness, both now and hereafter, are all ethical and spiritual. They make inheriting the Kingdom equivalent to being filled with righteousness, obtaining mercy, seeing God, and living as His children (Matt. v. 2f.). The New Testament is filled with this conception of the Kingdom. St. Paul can state the content of the Christian hope as being for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 17). While the pages of the New Testament contain imaginative delineations of the glory that shall be, they do not divert attention from the main

matter. In this respect no words of the New Testament better express the spirit of the Master's teaching than these : " Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is " (1 John iii. 2).

We return to the central question of this inquiry, the relation in which the Kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus, stands to the processes of history. We take the truth to be that Jesus, having founded the Kingdom as a new Divine life in this world, retained for the Kingdom, so explained, the predicates with which Jewish faith and imagination had invested it. In a very clear way He brought the Kingdom into line with historical processes issuing from Him for the realization of God's idea. The Kingdom comes not by evolution but by the power of God entering into the evolutionary process. Jesus laid all the emphasis on the power of God received by faith. It was His exaltation of the power of God that accounts for the great foreshortening of the future which His later teaching reveals. His faith in God made Him declare the Kingdom to be no result of ethical processes gradually attaining their end, but the immediate triumph of power from on high. All this was the read-

ing of history from the standpoint of faith. *It was history seen not as the unfolding of immanent processes but as the revelation of God.*

It was Jesus' conviction, a conviction which grew deeper with time, that the Kingdom would come in its glory only with His own triumph, and in regard to this triumph the passage in Daniel vii. 13-14 imparted a decisive direction to His thoughts. He saw there the way in which the death of the Cross was to receive its Divine vindication. We do not approach the Parousia-prediction rightly unless we come to it from this side, by way of Gethsemane and Calvary. Jesus had the absolute assurance, as He went forward to the Cross, that God would yet vindicate Him and His cause, and the Danielic prophecy gave Him language in which to express His thoughts. The Parousia indeed is not the only form in which the thought of His victory finds expression. Along with the predictions of the Parousia there are the predictions, beginning with Mark viii. 31, of His rising from the dead. Taking the Marcan narrative for our guide, we find the two series of predictions occurring as follows :

1. Rising from the dead, Mark viii. 31 ; ix. 9-10 ; ix. 31 ; x. 34.

2. Coming on the clouds of heaven, Mark viii. 38 ; xiii. 26 ; xiv. 62.

The fact that the two sets of sayings occur in separate series, though proceeding out of the same situation, has given rise to the idea that what we have here is not the prediction of two separate events, but alternative ways in which the same event, the Divine vindication of Jesus, is foreshadowed.[1] It favours this idea that in the thought of the times the resurrection from the dead was associated with the last day (John xi. 24). It might be argued that the definite dating of the event in Matt. and Luke as " the third day " (Matt. xvi. 21= Luke ix. 22 ; Matt. xvii. 23 ; Matt. xx. 19= Luke xviii. 23) was determined by the force of subsequent events, and that the Marcan form " after three days " (Mark viii. 31 ; ix. 31 ; x. 34), which is simply a general designation of a brief interval, represents the original prediction of Jesus. The Resurrection and the Parousia, according to this view, were variant forms, both founded on Scriptural promise, in which Jesus uttered His thoughts of what the end of the age would bring to Him. But it may be doubted if any interpretation of the words " after three days " is quite reconcilable with Jesus' references to the date of the Parousia. Moreover, while the New Testament is inspired by the conviction that the

[1] Cp. Feine, *N.T. Theologie*, p. 195.

resurrection on the third day is an already accomplished fact, it is just as certain that the other event, the Parousia, has still to be waited for. Yet if there had been any feeling that the Lord used the two ideas convertibly, it is difficult to see how the tradition could have maintained them inviolably apart.

Certainly the Parousia formed a separate and distinct element in Jesus' thought of the future. The Gospels contain a series of parables the whole interest of which turns on the certainty of the Lord's return. And this brings us to the question of the date. Some of these parables seem designed to prepare the disciples for a certain postponement of the Parousia. The Parousia will not come so swiftly that watching and waiting will not be required. "If the householder knew in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched" (Matt. xxiv. 43). "If he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants" (Luke xii. 38). The parable of the Ten Virgins assumes that the Lord may tarry (Matt. xxv. 5), and in the parable of the Talents it is said, "After a long time the lord of these servants cometh" (Matt. xxv. 19). The Gospel of Luke represents the parable of the Pounds as spoken "because they supposed

that the Kingdom of God would immediately appear" (Luke xix. 11). It may be that some of these time-references in Matthew and Luke spring from the desire to comfort the Church for the non-fulfilment of the Parousia-prediction in the first generation. But if it be admitted that the Lord spoke of the destruction of the temple and the downfall of the Jewish theocracy as events preceding the end of the age, it follows that He did not think of the latter event as immediate. It may be argued, of course, that the so-called "Little Apocalypse" proceeds out of the same situation as the parables just referred to in Matthew and Luke, and that its object was to buoy up the faith of the Church in a trying time, but while this may account in part for certain elements of the discourse in question, it would nevertheless appear that Jesus was believed by His Church to have spoken of the downfall of the Jewish theocracy as a necessary pre-condition of the final victory of the Kingdom (Matt. xxi. 43). Some of Jesus' utterances in regard to the Parousia, therefore, were understood to imply a somewhat protracted delay.

On the other hand, there is the word belonging to the same discourse, and confirmed by Jesus' saying in Mark ix. 1, "This generation shall not pass away until all these things are

accomplished " (Mark xiii. 30). If the " Little Apocalypse " was intended in part to tide the Church over a crucial time of trial, it is natural that it should combine a certain reserve in regard to the exact date of the Parousia with the certainty that it would come within such and such a time. But it is difficult to see how the event could, in a document of this kind, have been dated as exactly as it is, viz., in " this generation," unless this prognostication was believed very definitely to rest on an assured prediction of Jesus. If we are to face the full difficulty of the Parousia-question we shall feel that Mark xiii. 30 prescribes the *terminus intra quem* of our Lord's expectation. The other sayings which intimate delay are, if we are to unify the references at all, to be subordinated to this other, which fixes the ultimate limit of waiting and expectation. Even the saying " Of that day or that hour none knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father " (Mark xiii. 32) is not in contradiction with the other word, since all that it need mean is that the precise moment of the Parousia is hid in God. Jesus therefore expected to return in glory before the then existing generation should have passed away.

In the literal form in which it was made, the Parousia-prediction has not been fulfilled.

The Parousia did not occur in New Testament times, and it has not occurred yet. How are we to relate our faith to this admitted fact? Is the conviction which Jesus uttered in the form of the Parousia-prediction one which its literal non-fulfilment can be said to have belied?

The answer to that question is the history of the Christian Church. Though the Christian Church has never abandoned the thought that the Parousia-prediction may be fulfilled in some form yet unknown, the real attitude of faith to this cardinal matter is given in the way the Church survived the disappointment of its first expectation. It has had in its present experience of Jesus a certainty from the standpoint of which it has been able to re-interpret the thought of His coming. It had come to grips with the disappointment of its first hope before the canon of the New Testament was complete, and its triumphant continuance on its way is the proof that, though Jesus has not come on the clouds of heaven, externally revealed in history, He has come in other ways. There are a few observations which it remains to make in regard to the form into which Jesus threw the thought of the final triumph of Himself and the Kingdom.

(1) The truth of the Parousia-prediction is not to be judged by its perspective. We may

reverently believe that to Jesus, as to those for whom He lived and died, the Future was the Ineffable, and that the certainties which flashed out of the unknown were *moral* certainties. When He spoke of the immediacy of His victory in time, it was a Credo, an act of faith, by which, on the basis of Scriptural promise, Jesus affirmed His unshaken belief in God's power to vindicate His cause. We may believe that when He said to the High Priest and his court, " You shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven," He had in mind not a historical date, but the moral necessity with which His Divine vindication must come. It was natural to envisage it within the limits of the existing generation, for it was in that generation that Jesus' life and death were cast. It was His world. The horizon of His assurance enclosed the field of His earthly labour. He had the certainty in His own experience of God that God's purpose for the world could not be indefinitely postponed. All this made the inclusion of His own generation in the prediction an integral part of the Credo which He expressed.

(2) If Jesus' prediction is not to be judged by its perspective, neither is it to be judged by its particular form or colouring. The language in which it is expressed is derived

entirely from the passage in Daniel. There is not a single point in which Jesus goes beyond His Scriptural source, which is the sufficient proof that His prediction rested not on prevision of the future, but on the promise of God given in His word. It would be wrong indeed to think that the Saviour used the words of Daniel only as a symbol of His triumph, and that He was thinking of a spiritual coming. Yet symbol they were, as every attempt to express the ineffable in human speech must be. And if Peter on the day of Pentecost could regard the words of Joel ii. 28-32 as already fulfilled, though there had been no "wonders in the heaven above," or "signs on the earth beneath" (Acts ii. 19), we shall not think the Apostle John was wrong when he laid aside the spectacular idea of the Saviour's coming and put a spiritual idea in its place.

(3) We must recognize the extent to which apocalyptic thought determined the form of Jesus' whole message, and regard the *form* of the Parousia-prediction as simply the supreme and final instance of Jesus' use of the language of His time. It is only natural that His dependence on prophecy should reach its climax in His teaching with regard to the *future*. But if our inquiry has shown us anything, it has shown us that, while the apocalyptic idea of

salvation supplied the mould for Jesus' teaching, His thought broke the mould and overflowed in the sense of a salvation already achieved on earth. The Kingdom had touched earth, this earth, so to speak, through His redeeming work, and it may be asked whether we have not here the standpoint from which to interpret the future work and victory of Christ. If Jesus regarded the eschatological hope as already fulfilled in the new life of reconciliation to God which He had opened among men, is it not legitimate to translate the whole future hope into terms of spiritual experience, and to regard the final victory of Christ as in line with the whole spiritual movement which He began on earth? No one, indeed, has the right to say that the Parousia-prediction may not be fulfilled in some form as yet undreamt-of, but the spiritual fulfilment of Christ's triumphant assurance commends itself to the Christian mind as a real one, and as that which corresponds best with the whole relation of Jesus to apocalyptic ideas.

(4) This at any rate is the standpoint which the New Testament has already reached by the time it is completed. To St. Paul the Kingdom of God is not something that lies wholly in the future, but something which is already matter of experience. He speaks of God as having

translated Christians into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have our redemption (Col. i. 13). And though in his earlier Epistles he cherishes the hope that the Lord will return during his lifetime, by the time the Epistle to the Philippians was written this hope is one of the things he has left behind, and he contemplates the possibility of his own going to be with Christ, instead of Christ coming to be with His Church on earth (Phil. i. 23). Certainly the emphasis of the New Testament is increasingly on the new spiritual life in the present, in which it sees the new creation (2 Cor. v. 17). By the time the Johannine scriptures were written, the translation of eschatological into spiritual values is complete, and judgment, eternal life, and the return of Christ to be with His own, are construed as historical experiences in time. The forms of Messianic thought have been almost entirely laid aside, and the greater conception, of which the Messianic idea was only a phase, that Christ is the eternal Son of God occupies the field. We may be content to leave the last word on this whole matter to the disciple whom Jesus loved. If his "bold transmutation" of the predictions of Jesus, as Dr. Denney has said, "did not deprive the beloved disciple of his faith, it need as little deprive us of ours."

CHAPTER VII

JEWISH APOCALYPTIC, MODERN THOUGHT, AND THE MIND OF JESUS CHRIST

MESSIANIC eschatology was the form in which Jesus' thought of His redemptive mission to the world was cast. His prediction of the Parousia was His reading of future history in the light of faith. The foreshortening of the future which the prediction involved sprang from the perfect clearness with which He apprehended the issues of His work. It was telescopic vision, the prolepsis of history, the summation of results in one great fact. It was history revealed in the lightning-flash, history comprised in one tremendous Credo. But this Credo rested on an experience of God which Jesus knew to be absolute and final. When we trace it to its ultimate roots, it is based on the sense of a perfect and unbroken fellowship with God, realizing the idea of Sonship to the Father. Jesus was conscious of being perfectly at one with God, and His vocation was to bring men to God and to the possession of the filial life and consciousness. Psychologically, the connection between the filial consciousness of Jesus and the preaching of the Kingdom was

this—the Divine idea was so present to Jesus' mind, it filled Him so absolutely, that to pass from its realization in Himself to its realization in humanity was but a single step.

Jesus' message, therefore, is independent of the apocalyptic language in which it was delivered. It was in essence an expression of *the urgency, immediacy, and inevitable triumph of God's will to reconcile the world to Himself.* This agrees with the evidence of the Gospels where, although apocalyptic forms of expression abound, the emphasis is all upon the filial life and character, " that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." We may define the essence of Christianity, therefore, as the filial life toward God (Matt. v. 45 ; John i. 12 ; 1 John iii. 1-2) or, connecting it more closely with its source, as the indwelling Christ, " Christ in you, the hope of glory " (Col. i. 27). This phrase of St. Paul, given its proper range and plenitude of meaning, covers all that the Master meant by the triumph of His Kingdom. Jesus sought the realization of the filial idea, not only in the individual but in the corporate life of humanity. The Kingdom of God in its Jewish sense was a social conception, and Jesus retained it in this character. The end toward which He saw the purpose of God moving was nothing

less than a redeemed and glorified humanity. But in the process by which this end is realized the redemption of the individual units comes first (Matt. xviii. 3).

Redemption, the triumph of God, the sovereignty of Love, strives towards a social end, the accomplishment of which alone abolishes the ills under which humanity labours. We have now to ask what light Jesus' Gospel of the Kingdom throws on the modern belief in history, the doctrine that progress is bound to come with time.

There are two forms in which the human mind has envisaged the realization of the Divine purpose in history. The one is that which finds expression in Jewish apocalyptic literature. The Will of God is conceived as wrought by intervention. God acts on human history from without. The City of God comes down out of heaven by *fiat* of the Almighty. It is the doctrine of the Great Surprise. The decline and fall of man is arrested by a great crisis or *bouleversement*, through which the Will of God is realized at one stroke, and God becomes all in all.

> "That time is the consummation of that which is corruptible,
> And the beginning of that which is not corruptible.
> Therefore those things which were predicted shall belong to it ;

> Therefore is it far away from evils, and near to those things which die not.
> This is the bright lightning which came after the dark waters." *Apocalypse of Baruch*, lxxiv. 2-4.

The defect of this view is that it separates God from the human process. It is based on despair of history, and it reduces human personality, faith and effort almost to a nullity. With all its passion for righteousness, and its refusal to acquiesce in the evils of the world, it becomes a sort of fatalism, benumbing and paralysing the springs of energy and life. Its merit, on the other hand, is that it vests the hope of good in God. It believes in the Divine Will to Good. It holds moreover, rightly, that God's purpose for the world is not limited to what goes on in the daily process of the suns. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

On the other hand, at the opposite extreme is the modern belief in evolutionary progress. The Will of God is conceived to be wrought by immanent Law, the sequence of cause and effect. The City of God, wherein dwelleth righteousness, is the goal towards which our feet are always tending. It is not a miracle which comes suddenly out of Heaven from God, but an achievement of the human spirit rising gradually on the green earth we know.

We keep before us always "the naturally revealed End towards which the Power manifested throughout Evolution works."[1] The highest life of humanity then follows in due course. The merit of this view is that it connects God with the human process. It sees a will to good in all the intricate details of the human process. It exalts human personality and effort. It reconciles us to the world around us. Its defect is that it confines God within the human process. It shuts us up to the result of laws and tendencies which are already working. It does not sufficiently allow for new factors which may at any time enter into the process, and alter its whole character and tendency. Thus this doctrine also ends ultimately in fatalism. It is, when stated in religious terms, the doctrine of a limited God, a God whose activities are confined to processes already manifest.

Both views, when seriously related to the facts of life, come up against the retarding force of sin. There is something in the human process which opposes itself to the will of God and has to be removed. On the purely evolutionary hypothesis, sin is but the remnant of an earlier, less developed stage of human existence, which will be sloughed off with time. It is here, however, that the evolutionary theory is compelled to admit its inade-

[1] Spencer, *Data of Ethics*, p. 171.

quacy as an explanation of the moral facts of life. Human history is not always progress, and even if *on the whole* it is progressive, that fact is not enough to make the doctrine of progress a Gospel for ages in which the tide of good seems to be ebbing, and we are left in shallow waters.

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
> Omitted, all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Evolution is not a Gospel for the individual who, in the race of life, as the result of sin or folly, is left behind, thrown aside out of the track. If no redeeming forces can be liberated in life other than those already working in the inexorable sequence of events, there is not much comfort for those who have made mistakes or are already broken on the wheel of life.

> "The life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us—and, more or less, of those who are connected with us—do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance."[1]

[1] Huxley, *A Liberal Education*, p. 58.

Between the two opposing views, sharing features of each, and yet transcending both, stands Jesus' Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It is important to grasp in what, as contrasted with these other doctrines, its specific quality consists.

On the one hand, Jesus shared with the apocalyptic creed of His day the thought that salvation is something given, a new thing which comes into life by interposition of God. Salvation is Intervention, the coming of God into the lives of men to make all things new. The power of God is not limited to what has always been going on in history. It is the emergence in life of a new creative and redemptive energy. Jesus not only spoke the language of apocalyptic, but *thought* of the Kingdom as coming down from above. He retained for His own conception all the predicates with which apocalyptic had invested the coming era of salvation and He said that all that prophets and apocalyptists had dreamed of was now coming into the world through Him. Jesus, therefore, claims for salvation the character of a Divine interposition. It is not by the mere working out of human processes that the Kingdom comes, but by the entrance of God in a new sense on the stage of life, the intervention of God to right the wrongs of the

world, to reconcile the world to Himself, and to bring it to its goal.

On the other hand, Jesus related this interposition of God to the historical process. While the apocalyptist turned his back on history, Jesus claimed it as a coefficient of the Divine purpose. He spoke of human life as the field into which the seed of the Kingdom was cast. Jesus gave the Kingdom of God an essentially human character. It consists in the filial life towards God on the part of a reconciled and redeemed humanity. He stated His doctrine in terms simple enough to make it a Gospel for the broken and the fallen: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." He stated it in terms wide enough to include the furthest-reaching social and collective aims: "that they may be one, even as we are." Unlike the apocalyptist, Jesus despaired neither of nature nor of man. Nature is good in His eyes; it is to be loved and trusted (Matt. v. 45). Man is redeemable, and the object of God's love (Luke xv. 7, 10, 32). In this manner Jesus brought the apocalyptist's vision and the human process together again. He regarded God's will to redeem as taking up the human process under the power of its operations, and claiming it for Himself.

But where the Gospel of Jesus differed both from the apocalyptic view of His time and from the evolutionary idea is in the area it gives to Faith and the Cross. Between the Kingdom of God and the human process stands the Cross of Jesus, and the call to Faith in God. Jesus emphasized the boundless power of faith. He declared the want of faith to be the one obstacle to the accomplishment of God's purpose. Also He said that His own destiny could only be fulfilled, and the Kingdom come, by way of the Cross.

"*The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed.*"

"*I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!*"

These were new ideas in relation to the apocalyptic doctrines of His time, and they are absent from the modern popular ideas of evolutionary progress. It is important for us to grasp their significance.

(1) The defect of the evolutionary idea of progress is that, in the popular forms in which it is held, it does not allow for spiritual factors entering into, and controlling, the march of events. It overlooks the fact that as soon as in the order of the world the human stage is reached, the spiritual becomes the dominant

factor. "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." The mind of God reveals itself to the mind of man, and it is the Divine idea that then operates as the principle of progress. Apart from this, evolution is a merely mechanical process, of which we cannot even say that it is good. On the other hand, under the apocalyptic scheme, faith is confined to the apprehension of the Divine idea. The apocalyptist cannot give effect in any way to his aspirations. He can only wait and say, *Adhuc enim modicum aliquantulum; qui venturus est, veniet, et non tardabit.*

He cannot realize on earth his idea of the City of God. It must come down complete out of heaven.

Jesus called men to faith in the sense of appropriating the Divine idea, and incarnating it in actual life. Faith brings the Divine idea and the human process into union. The Gospel is in line with apocalyptic because it conceives the design and power of the future as coming from above. It is in line with evolution because it presents the Kingdom of God in connection with a choice making for life and more life. Just as the individuals of every species in the evolutionary process, living by adaptation to environment, have to re-

adapt themselves to new conditions as time goes on, and so advance a new step by which life is promoted and increased, so the human individual in the human process loses life in one sense to find it in another. The alternatives are moral. *Choose this day whom you will serve.* When Jesus held the Divine idea before men, and called on them to enter into the Kingdom, He was integrating the Kingdom of God into the historical process, and claiming the historical process for God. The apocalyptic stage of thought is transcended.

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven?

When we look at the break-down of the historical process around us, as revealed in the European War, we find the cause in a failure to integrate the Divine idea into the process. We have refused to regard the Divine idea as practicable, and this has followed from want of belief in its power. But it is not evolution *per se* that is thereby discredited, but evolution divorced from faith.

This only would I learn from you. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The world requires to be reconstructed on a better foundation of faith, if evolution is to serve as a theory of progress. Man does not

live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

(2) Faith is the appropriation of the *power* of God as working behind the Divine idea. The New Testament expresses this when it speaks of Christ as "the power of God," and presents Him as "the hope of Glory." The whole sense of the New Testament is that in Jesus of Nazareth, His life, His principles, and His Cross, we have the true exhibition of the Divine. Jesus of Nazareth shows us God, and, therefore, God's wisdom and power.

Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Much of the modern reaction against the ethic of Christianity as a possible law of conduct for individuals and societies has been rooted in scepticism as to its practical character. It has been regarded as a very beautiful and sublime ideal, but not power, the power to which we can commit our destinies. But this is due to separation of the Christian ethic from the context in which Christ presented it. Christ presented it in association with a new liberation of Divine energy, establishing the Kingdom of God. Until we recognise it as the revelation of God and all that we mean by Divine power, there is no escape from division of aims, weakness, futility.

> "Beside the Gospel there are demands of power and of right, without which human society cannot exist.—I myself at least do not know how to help myself in the conflict between Christianity and other tasks of life, save by the attempt to recognize the limits of Christianity."[1]

> "How am I to say that Bismarck's preparations for the Schleswig-Holstein war were a service in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ? I cannot manage to do so. Yet all the same I admire these preparations. It does not occur to me to lament them. Not every doing of one's duty is Christian. Bismarck did his duty, for his avocation was the cultivation of power."[2]

This is very far from the New Testament doctrine that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. But it is easy to see where the fallacy lies. Christ is not the *power* of God. The only escape from Naumann's refusal to apply the ethic of Christ to the whole of life is once more to see in it the power and wisdom of God.

(3) Faith is acceptance of the Cross as the way in which the Divine power is manifested. Jesus saw in the Cross the sole condition of His work being accomplished, and the Kingdom of God established with power. His Cross is presented to us in the New Testament as the supreme exhibition not only of the Divine Love but of the Divine Power.

The Jews ask for signs, and the Greeks seek

[1] Fr. Naumann, *Briefe über Religion*, p. 69. The citation is from the extract given by Von Hügel, *The German Soul*, p. 54.

[2] Fr. Naumann, op. cit., p. 72.

after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The Jewish apocalyptist, believing in Divine intervention as the solution of the human problem, saw nothing in the Cross that seemed to him Divinely interventionary. The Greek, asking for self-evident truth as his solution of the same problem, saw nothing in the Cross that appealed to him as Divinely wise or self-evidencing. But to St. Paul the Cross was Intervention, and the Cross was the Divine self-evidence. In the Cross he saw the way in which God commended His love and His purpose to us. Whatever else, therefore, the Cross may mean, it exhibits the spirit in which the world is overcome, and the Divine idea realized on earth.

There is still the type of mind which asks that God should intervene in human affairs, and establish His sovereignty by abrupt show of power. It overlooks the fact that God is always intervening, but in the way of the Cross. When Jesus stretched out His arms on the Cross, it was the supreme appeal of God to the human spirit. And it is by the spirit of the Cross entering into, and taking possession

of human life and character, that the Kingdom of God still comes.

I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne . . . saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

It is objected to the ethic of the Cross that it is weak, too weak to govern and subdue the forces that war against it in the human mind. The New Testament answer is that this is to look at it merely humanly, and to forget the power of God behind it.

He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. We also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God.

In other words, what seems Impotence to men is in reality Omnipotence.

We sum up, therefore, that Jesus brought the Kingdom of God into human life as vision, power and reality, and to the unfolding on earth of the filial life towards God He attached the whole promise of the future. This life comes through Him, and thus rises the City of God on earth. But it is by faith on the human side, and by acceptance of the Cross, that it comes.

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